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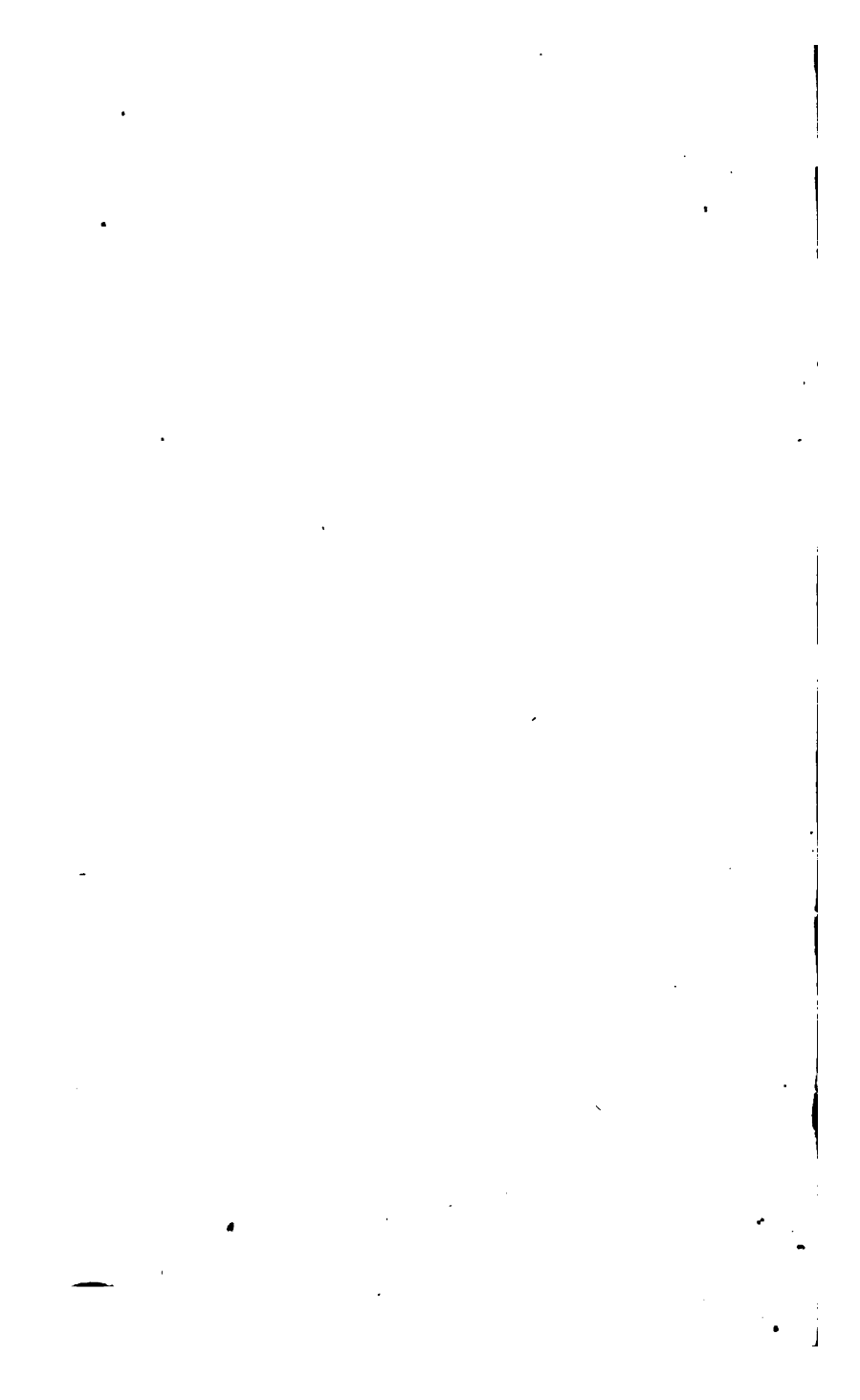
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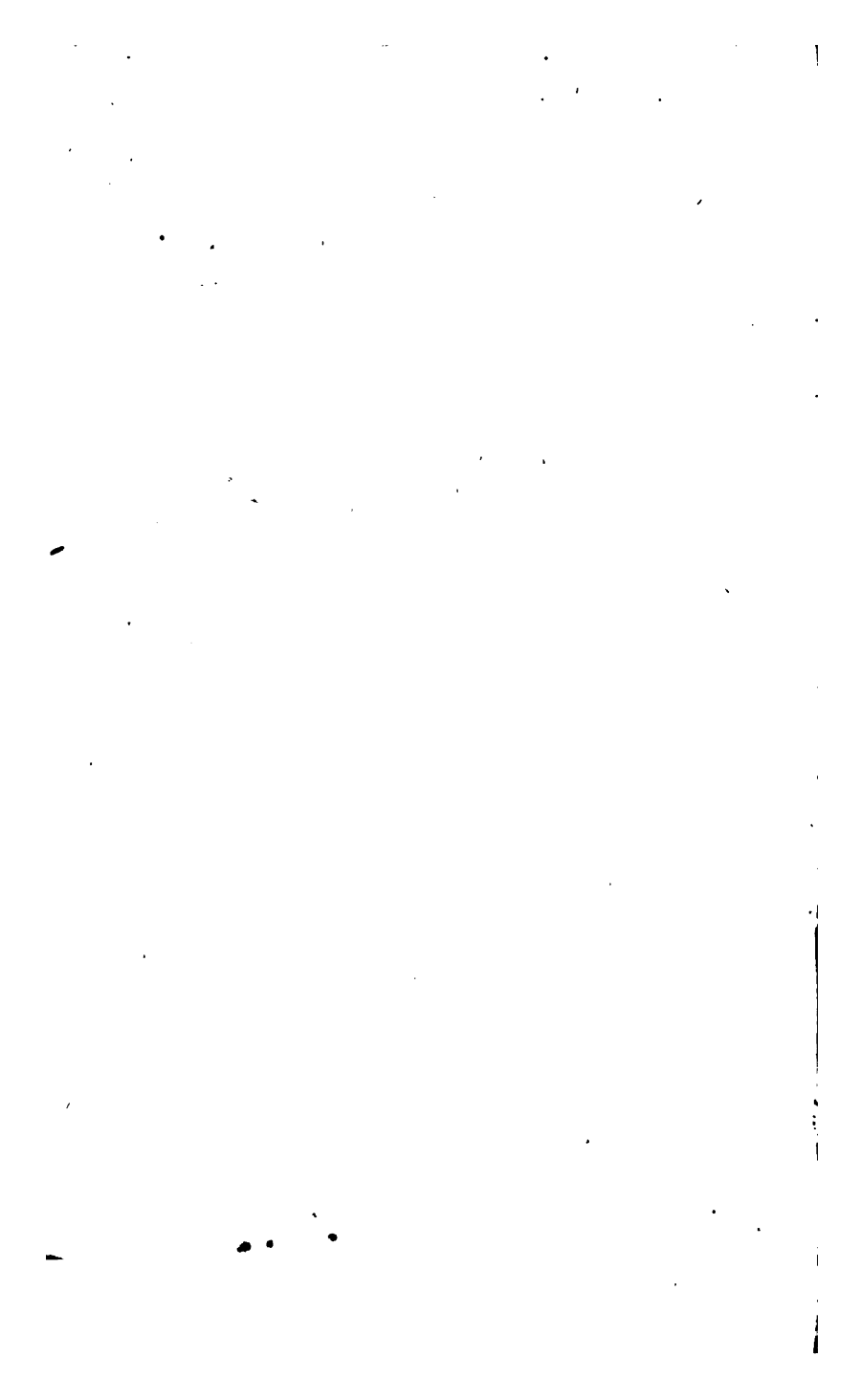
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1838

Geo Inffulder







INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL

IN

GREECE, TURKEY, RUSSIA

AND

P O L A N D.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL IN EGYPT, ARABIA PETRÆA, AND THE
HOLY LAND."

Stephen John May

WITH A MAP AND ENGRAVINGS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

FOURTH EDITION.

NEW-YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF-STREET.

1838.



Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1838, by
HARPER & BROTHERS,
in the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of New-York.

Gift -
Tappan Press, Ass
2-13-1932

Q6-3-33 H.C.M.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

Choice of a Conveyance.—Hiring a Servant.—Another American.—Beginning of Troubles.—A Bivouac.—Russian Jews.—The Steppes of Russia.—A Traveller's Story.—Approach to Chioff.—How to get rid of a Servant.—History of Chioff Page 7

CHAPTER II.

A lucky Encounter.—Church of the Catacombs.—A Visit to the Saints.—A tender Parting.—Pilgrims.—Rough Treatment.—A Scene of Starvation.—Russian Serfs.—Devotion of the Serfs.—Approach to Moscow 28

CHAPTER III.

Moscow.—A severe Operation.—An Exile by Accident.—Meeting with an Emigré.—A civil Stranger.—A Spy.—The Kremlin.—Sepulchres of the Czars.—The great Bell.—The great Gun.—Precious Relics . . . 45

CHAPTER IV.

The Drosky.—Salle des Nobles.—Russian Gaming.—Gastronomy.—Pedroski.—A Sunday in Moscow.—A Gipsy Belle.—Tea drinking.—The Emperor's Garden.—Retrospective 67

CHAPTER V.

Getting a Passport.—Parting with the Marquis.—The Language of Signs.—A loquacious Traveller.—From Moscow to St. Petersburg.—The Wolga.—Novogorod.—Newski Perspective.—An unfortunate Mistake.—Northern Twilight 85

CHAPTER VI.

Police Requisites.—The Russian Capital.—Equestrian Statue of Peter the Great.—The Alexandrian Column.—Architectural Wonders.—The Summer Islands.—A perilous Achievement.—Origin of St. Petersburg.—Tombs of dead Monarchs.—Origin of the Russian Navy . Page 97

CHAPTER VII.

A Carrot Pole.—The Winter Palace.—Importance of a Hat.—An artificial Mine.—Remains of a huge Monster.—Peter the Great's Workshop.—The Greek Religion.—Tomb of a Hero.—A Saint Militant.—Another Love Affair.—The Hermitage.—The Winter and Summer Gardens 118

CHAPTER VIII.

An Imperial Fête.—Nicolas of Russia.—Varied Splendours.—A Soliloquy.—House of Peter the Great.—A Bostraca.—Czarekoselo.—The Amber Chamber.—Catharine II.—The Emperor Alexander . . 140

CHAPTER IX.

The Soldier's Reward.—Review of the Russian Army.—American Cannibals.—Palace of Potemkin.—Palace of the Grand-duke Michael.—Equipments for Travelling.—Rough Riding.—Poland.—Vitepsk.—Napoleón in Poland.—The Disastrous Retreat.—Passage of the Berezina 154

CHAPTER X.

Travel by Night.—A Rencontre.—A Traveller's Message.—Lithuania.—Poverty of the Country.—Agricultural Implements.—Minak.—Polish Jews.—A Coin of Freedom.—Riding in a Basket.—Brezc.—The Bug.—A searching Operation.—Women Labourers.—Warsaw . . . 181

CHAPTER XI.

Warsaw.—A Polish Doctor.—Battle of Grokow.—The Outbreak.—The fatal Issue.—Present Condition of Poland.—Polish Exiles.—Aspect of Warsaw.—Traits of the Poles 190

CHAPTER XII.

Religion of Poland.—Sunday in Warsaw.—Baptized Jews.—Palaces of the Polish Kings.—Sobieski.—Field of Vola.—Wreck of a Warrior.—The Poles in America.—A Polish Lady.—Troubles of a Passport.—Departure from Warsaw.—An official Rachel.—A mysterious Visitor 215

CONTENTS.

v

CHAPTER XIII.

Friendly Solicitude.—Raddom.—Symptoms of a Difficulty.—A Court of Inquisition.—Showing a proper Spirit.—Troubles thickening.—Approaching the Climax.—Woman's Influence.—The Finale.—Utility of the Classics.—Another Latinist.—A Lucky Accident.—Arrival at Cracow
Page 235

CHAPTER XIV.

Cracow.—Casimir the Great.—Kosciusko.—Tombs of the Polish Kings.—A Polish Heroine.—Last Words of a King.—A Hero in Decay.—The Salt-mines of Cracow.—The Descent.—The Mines.—Underground Meditations.—The Farewell 254



INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL

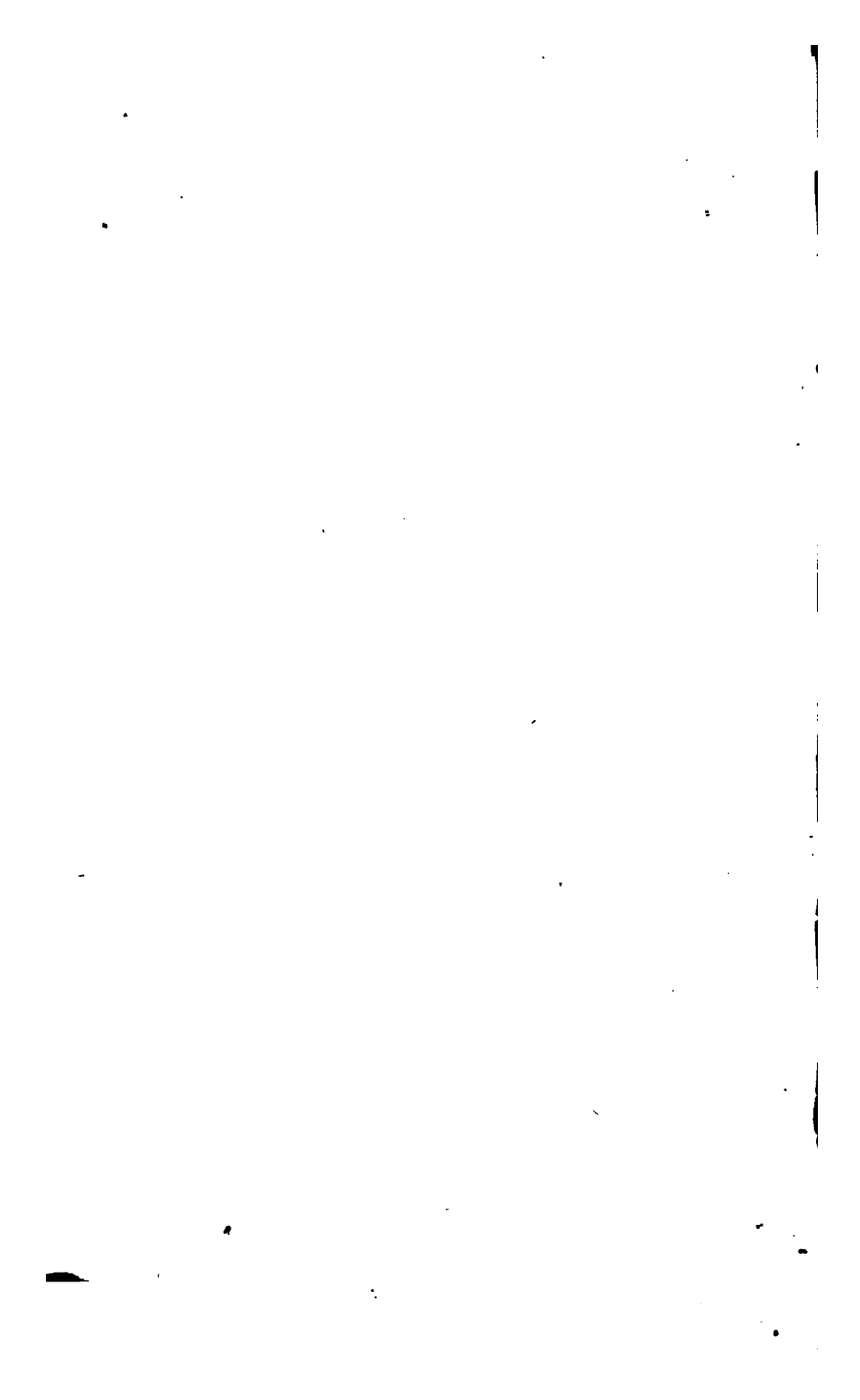
IN

GREECE, TURKEY, RUSSIA, AND POLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Choice of a Conveyance.—Hiring a Servant.—Another American.—Beginning of Troubles.—A Bivouac.—Russian Jews.—The Steppes of Russia.—A Traveller's Story.—Approach to Chioff.—How to get rid of a Servant.—History of Chioff.

I HAD before me a journey of nearly two thousand miles, through a country more than half barbarous, and entirely destitute of all accommodation for travellers. Southern Russia was the Scythia of Darius, "savage from the remotest time." "All the way," says an old traveller, "I never came in a house, but lodged in the wilderness by the river side, and carried provisions by the way, for there be small succour in those parts;" and we were advised that a century had made but little change in the interior of the empire. There were no public conveyances, and we had our choice of three modes of travelling; first, by a Jew's wagon, in which the traveller stretches out his bed, and is trundled along like a bale of goods, always with the same horses, and therefore, of necessity, making slow progress; secondly, the *char de poste*, a mere box of wood on four wheels, with straw in the bottom; very fast, but to be changed always with the posthorses; and, thirdly, posting with our own carriage. We did not hesitate long in choos-





four shaggy, wild-looking little animals, which no comb or brush had ever touched, harnessed with a collar and rope lines. They were tied in with rope traces, all abreast, two on each side the pole, and a postillion with a low wool cap, sheepskin coat and trousers, the woolly side next the skin, who would make an English whip stare, mounted the box. Henri followed, and my companion and myself took our seats within. The day before we had a positive quarrel upon a point unnecessary here to mention, in which I thought and still think he acted wrong, and the dispute had run so high that I told him I regretted exceedingly having made arrangements for travelling with him, and proposed even then to part company ; he objected, and as we had purchased a carriage jointly, and particularly as our passports were prepared, our *podoroshni* made out, and servant hired in our joint names, I was fain to go on ; and in this inauspicious humour toward each other we set out for a journey of nearly two thousand miles, through a wild and desolate country, among a half-civilized people, whose language we could not understand, and with a servant whom we distrusted and disliked.

In spite of all this, however, I felt a high degree of excitement in starting for the capital of Russia ; and I will do my companion the justice to say that he had been always ready to receive my advances, and to do more than meet me half way, which I afterward learned was from an apprehension of the taunts of his companions, who, not satisfied with getting rid of him, had constantly told him that it was impossible for an Englishman and an American to travel together, and that we would quarrel and fight the first day. I believe that I am enough of an American in my feelings, but such an idea had never entered my head ; I met many

Englishmen, and with some formed a friendship which, I trust, will last through life; and among all I met, these two were the only *young* men so far behind the spirit of the age as to harbour such a thought. I did meet one *old* gentleman, who, though showing me personally the greatest kindness, could not forget the old grudge. But men cannot be driving their elbows into each other's ribs, comparing money accounts, and consulting upon the hundred little things that present themselves on such a journey, without getting upon at least sociable terms; and before night of the first day the feelings of my companion and myself had undergone a decided change.

But to go back to Odessa. At the barrier we found a large travelling-carriage stopping the way, in which was my friend Mr. Ralli, with his lady, on his way to Nicolaïf; part of his business there was to erect a monument to the memory of a deceased countryman. Mr. Munroe, son of a former postmaster in Washington, is another instance of the success of American adventurers in Russia. He went out to St. Petersburg with letters from the Russian ambassador and others, and entered the army, the only road to distinction in Russia. He accompanied the Grand-duke Constantine to Poland, and was made one of his aid-de-camps, and on the death of Constantine was transferred to the staff of the Emperor Nicolas. At the time of the invasion of Turkey by the Egyptians under Ibrahim Pacha, Mr. Munroe held the rank of colonel in the army sent to the aid of the sultan. While the Russians were encamped at the foot of the Giant's Mountain, he visited Constantinople, and became acquainted with the American missionaries, who all spoke of him in the highest terms. He was a tall, well-made man, carried himself with a military air, and looked admirably well in the

Russian uniform. On the withdrawal of the Russians from the Black Sea, Mr. Munroe was left in some important charge at Nicolaïf, where he died in the opening of a brilliant career. I heard of him all over Russia, particularly from officers of the army; and being often asked if I knew him, regretted to be obliged to answer no. But, though personally unacquainted, as an American I was gratified with the name he had left behind him.

To return again to our journey: a few rubles satisfied the officer at the barrier that we were carrying nothing prohibited out of the "free port" of Odessa, and we started on a full run, to the great peril of our necks, and, to use the climax of a Dutch proclamation, "what's more, of breaking our carriage." In less than an hour we brought up before the door of a posthouse. Our wheels were smoking when we stopped. On our hind axle we carried a bucket of grease; half a dozen bipeds in sheepskin whipped off the wheels and greased them; four quadrupeds were tied into the carriage, another bête mounted the box, and we were off again at a full run. My companion undertook to keep a memorandum of expenses, and we put a certain sum in a purse and paid out of it till all was gone. This was a glorious beginning for a journey of two thousand miles. The country possessed little interest, being mostly level, and having but few villages. On the way we saw a natural phenomenon that is common enough in Egypt and the East, where the country is level, and known by the name of *mirage*. At a distance it seemed a mere pond or lake, and a drove of cattle passing over it looked as if they were walking in the water. We rolled on rapidly all day, passed through Balgarha, Kodurseve, and Pakra, timing every post and noting every village with a particularity

which it would be tedious here to repeat, and at about eight in the evening dashed into the little town of Vosnezeuski, one hundred and thirty versts from Odessa. Here we came to a dead stand. We had begun to entertain some apprehensions from the conduct of Monsieur Henri, who complained of the hardness of his seat, and asked if we did not intend to stop at night, recommending Vosnezeuski as a place where we could sleep in the posthouse ; we told him that we had no idea of stopping but to change horses, and should go on immediately.

Vosnezeuski lies on the river Bog, and is the chief town of the Cossacks of the Bog. This river is navigable for large vessels one hundred and fifty versts ; beyond this for three or four hundred versts it is full of cataracts. The Cossacks of the Bog are a warlike tribe, numbering from six to seven thousand, and living under the same military system with the Cossacks of the Don. But we fell into worse hands than the Cossacks. The postmaster was a Jew, and at first told us that he had no horses ; then that he had no postillion, but would hire one if we would pay him a certain sum, about four times the amount fixed by law. We had been obliged before to pay a few extra rubles, but this was our first serious difficulty with the postmasters ; and, in pursuance of the advice received at Odessa, we talked loud, demanded the book which is nailed to the table in every posthouse for travellers to enter complaints in, and threatened the vengeance of Count Woronzow and every one else, up to the emperor ; but the Jew laughed in our faces ; looked in our podoroshni, where we were described as simple travellers, without any of the formidable array of titles which procure respect in Russia ; told us we were no grand seigneurs, and that we must

either pay the price or wait, as our betters had done before us. We found too soon, as we had been advised at Odessa, that these fellows do not know such a character in society as a private gentleman; and if a man is not described in his *podoroshni* as a count, duke, or lord of some kind, or by some high-sounding military title, they think he is a merchant or manufacturer, or some other common fellow, and pay no regard to him. I relied somewhat upon my companion's having been made "noble," but now found that his consul had been rather chary of his honours, and, by the Russian word used, had not put him up high enough to be of any use. We had a long wrangle with the Jew, the result of which was, that we told him, probably in no very gentle phrase, that we would wait a month rather than submit to his extortion; and, drawing up the window of our carriage, prepared to pass the night at the door of the posthouse.

One of our party was evidently well satisfied with this arrangement, and he was Monsieur Henri. We had hired him by the day to Moscow, and, if we wanted him, to St. Petersburg, and very soon saw that he was perfectly content with the terms, and in no hurry to bring our journey to a close. From the moment of our arrival we suspected him of encouraging the postmaster in his efforts to detain us, and were so much fortified in this opinion by after circumstances, that, when he was about moving toward the house to pass the night within, we peremptorily ordered him to mount the box and sleep there; he refused, we insisted; and as this was the first day out and the first moment of actual collision, and it was all important to decide who should be master, we told him that, if he did not obey, we would discharge him on the spot, at the risk of being obliged

to work our way back to Odessa alone. And as he felt that, in that case, his debts would have been paid to no purpose, with a string of suppressed sacrés he took his place on the box. Our carriage was very comfortable, well lined and stuffed, furnished with pockets and everything necessary for the road, and we expected to sleep in it; but, to tell the truth, we felt rather cheap as we woke during the night, and looked at the shut door of the posthouse, and thought of the Jew sleeping away in utter contempt of us, and our only satisfaction was in hearing an occasional groan from Henri.

That worthy individual did not oversleep himself, nor did he suffer the Jew to do so either. Early in the morning, without a word on our part, the horses were brought out and harnessed to our vehicle, and the same man whom he professed to have hired expressly for us, and who, no doubt, was the regular postillion, mounted the box. The Jew maintained his impudence to the last, coming round to my window, and then asking a few rubles as a *douceur*. Good English would have been thrown away upon him, so I resented it by drawing up the window of the carriage and scowling at him through the glass.

Many of the postmasters along this road were Jews; and I am compelled to say that they were always the greatest scoundrels we had to deal with; and this is placing them on very high ground, for their inferiors in rascality would be accounted masters in any other country. No men can bear a worse character than the Russian Jews, and I can truly say that I found them all they were represented to be. They are not allowed to come within the territory of old Russia. Peter the Great refused their application to be permitted to approach nearer, smoothing his refusal by telling them

that his Russian subjects were greater Jews than they were themselves. The sagacious old monarch, however, was wrong ; for all the money business along the road is in their hands. They keep little taverns, where they sell vodka, a species of brandy, and wring from the peasant all his earnings, lending the money again to the seigneurs at exorbitant interest. Many of them are rich, and though alike despised by rich and poor, by the seigneur and the serf, they are proud of exhibiting their wealth, particularly in the jewels and ornaments of their women. At Savonka, a little village on the confines of old Poland, where we were detained waiting for horses, I saw a young girl about sixteen, a Polonese, sitting on the steps of a miserable little tavern, sewing together some ribands, with a headdress of brown cloth, ornamented with gold chains and pearls worth six hundred rubles, diamond earrings worth a hundred, and a necklace of ducats and other Dutch gold pieces worth four hundred rubles ; altogether, in our currency, worth perhaps two hundred and fifty dollars.

Here, too, while sitting with Henri on the steps of the posthouse, I asked him in a friendly way how he could be such a rascal as to league with the postmaster to detain us at Vosnezeuski, whereupon he went at once into French heroics, exclaiming, "*Monsieur, je suis vieux militaire—j'étais chasseur de Napoleon—mon honneur,*" &c. ; that he had never travelled before except with grand seigneurs, and then *in* the carriage, more as *compagnon de voyage* than as a servant, and intimated that it was a great condescension to travel with us at all.

We passed through several villages, so much alike and so uninteresting in appearance that I did not note even their names. As night approached we had great apprehensions that Henri would contrive to make us

stop again ; but the recollection of his bed on the box served as a lesson, and we rolled on without interruption. At daylight we awoke, and found ourselves upon the wild steppes of Russia, forming part of the immense plain which, beginning in northern Germany, extends for hundreds of miles, having its surface occasionally diversified by ancient tumuli, and terminates at the long



Tumuli on the Steppes.

chain of the Urals, which, rising like a wall, separates them from the equally vast plains of Siberia. The whole of this immense plain was covered with a luxuriant pasture, but bare of trees like our prairie lands, mostly uncultivated, yet everywhere capable of producing the same wheat which now draws to the Black Sea the vessels of Turkey, Egypt, and Italy, making Russia the granary of the Levant ; and which, within the last year, we have seen brought six thousand miles to our own doors. Our road over these steppes was in its natural state ; that is to say, a mere track worn by caravans of wagons ; there were no fences, and sometimes the route was marked at intervals by heaps of stones, intended as guides when the ground should be covered with snow. I had some anxiety about our carriage ; the spokes of the wheels were all strengthened and secured by cords wound tightly around them, and interlaced so as to make a network ; but the postillions were so perfectly reckless as to the fate of the carriage, that every crack went through me like a shot. The breaking of a wheel would have left us per-

fectly helpless in a desolate country, perhaps more than a hundred miles from any place where we could get it repaired. Indeed, on the whole road to Chioff there was not a single place where we could have any material injury repaired ; and the remark of the old traveller is yet emphatically true, that " there be small succour in these parts."

At about nine o'clock we whirled furiously into a little village, and stopped at the door of the posthouse. Our wheels were smoking with the rapidity of their revolutions ; Henri dashed a bucket of water over them to keep them from burning, and half a dozen men whipped them off and greased them. Indeed, greasing the wheels is necessary at every post, as otherwise the hubs become dry, so that there is actual danger of their taking fire ; and there is a *traveller's* story told (but I do not vouch for its truth) of a postillion, wagon, and passengers being all burned up on the road to Moscow by the ignition of the wheels.

The village, like all the others, was built of wood, plastered and whitewashed, with roofs of thatched straw, and the houses were much cleaner than I expected to find them. We got plenty of fresh milk ; the bread, which to the traveller in those countries is emphatically the staff of life, we found good everywhere in Russia, and at Moscow the whitest I ever saw. Henri was an enormous feeder, and, wherever we stopped, he disappeared for a moment, and came out with a loaf of bread in his hand and his mustache covered with the froth of quass, a Russian small beer. He said he was not always so voracious, but his seat was so hard, and he was so roughly shaken, that eating did him no good.

Resuming our journey, we met no travellers. Occasionally we passed large droves of cattle, but all the way from Odessa the principal objects were long trains of wagons, fifty or sixty together, drawn by oxen, and transporting merchandise toward Moscow or grain to the Black Sea. Their approach was indicated at a great distance by immense clouds of dust, which gave us timely notice to let down our curtains and raise our glasses. The wagoners were short, ugly-looking fellows, with huge sandy mustaches and beards, black woolly caps, and sheepskin jackets, the wool side next the skin; perhaps, in many cases, transferred warm from the back of one animal to that of the other, where they remained till worn out or eaten up by vermin. They had among them blacksmiths and wheelwrights, and spare wheels, and hammer, and tools, and everything necessary for a journey of several hundred miles. Half of them were generally asleep on the top of their loads, and they encamped at night in caravan style, arranging the wagons in a square, building a large fire, and sleeping around it. About midday we saw clouds gathering afar off in the horizon, and soon after the rain began to fall, and we could see it advancing rapidly over the immense level till it broke over our heads, and in a few moments passed off, leaving the ground smoking with exhalations.

Late in the afternoon we met the travelling equipage of a seigneur returning from Moscow to his estate in the country. It consisted of four carriages, with six or eight horses each. The first was a large, stately, and cumbrous vehicle, padded and cushioned, in which, as we passed rapidly by, we caught a glimpse of a corpulent Russian on the back seat, with his feet on the front,

bolstered all around with pillows and cushions, almost burying every part of him but his face, and looking the very personification of luxurious indulgence ; and yet, probably, that man had been a soldier, and slept many a night on the bare ground, with no covering but his military cloak. Next came another carriage, fitted out in the same luxurious style, with the seigneur's lady and a little girl ; then another with nurses and children ; then beds, baggage, cooking utensils, and servants, the latter hanging on everywhere about the vehicle, much in the same way with the pots and kettles. Altogether, it was an equipment in caravan style, somewhat the same as for a journey in the desert, the traveller carrying with him provision and everything necessary for his comfort, as not expecting to procure anything on the road, nor to sleep under a roof during the whole journey. He stops when he pleases, and his servants prepare his meals, sometimes in the open air, but generally at the posthouse. We had constant difficulties with Henri and the postmasters, but, except when detained for an hour or two by these petty tyrants, we rolled on all night, and in the morning again woke upon the same boundless plain.

The posthouse was usually in a village, but sometimes stood alone, the only object to be seen on the great plain. Before it was always a high square post, with black and white stripes, marking the number of versts from station to station ; opposite to this Henri dismounted, and presented the podoroshni or imperial order for horses. But the postmasters were high above the laws ; every one of them seemed a little autocrat in his own right, holding his appointment rather to prey upon than to serve travellers ; and the emperor's gov-

ernment would be but badly administered if his ukases and other high-sounding orders did not carry with them more weight than his *podoroshni*. The postmasters obeyed it when they pleased, and when they did not, made a new bargain. They always had an excuse; as, for instance, that they had no horses, or were keeping them in reserve for a courier or grand seigneur; but they listened to reason when enforced by rubles, and, as soon as a new bargain was made, half a dozen animals in sheepskin went out on the plain and drove up fifteen or twenty horses, small, rugged, and tough, with long and shaggy manes and tails, which no comb or brush had ever touched, and, diving among them promiscuously, caught four, put on rope headstalls, and tied them to our rope traces. The postillion mounted the box, and shouting and whipping his horses, and sometimes shutting his eyes, started from the post on a full gallop, carried us like the wind, *ventre à terre*, over the immense plain, sometimes without a rut or any visible mark to guide him, and brought us up all standing in front of the next post. A long delay and a short post, and this was the same over and over again during the whole journey. The time actually consumed in making progress was incredibly short, and I do not know a more beautiful way of getting over the ground than posting in Russia with a man of high military rank, who can make the post masters give him horses immediately on his arrival. As for us, after an infinite deal of vexation and at a ruinous expense, on the morning of the fourth day we were within one post of Chioff. Here we heard with great satisfaction that a diligence was advertised for Moscow, and we determined at once to get rid of carriage, posting, and Henri. We took our seats for the last time in the

calèche gave the postillion a double allowance of kopeks, and in half an hour saw at a great distance the venerable city of Chioff, the ancient capital of Russia. It stands at a great height, on the crest of an amphitheatre of hills, which rise abruptly in the middle of an immense plain, apparently thrown up by some wild freak of nature, at once curious, unique, and beautiful. The style of its architecture is admirably calculated to give effect to its peculiar position; and, after a dreary journey over the wild plains of the Ukraine, it breaks upon the traveller with all the glittering and gorgeous splendour of an Asiatic city. For many centuries it has been regarded as the Jerusalem of the North, the sacred and holy city of the Russians; and, long before reaching it, its numerous convents and churches, crowning the summit and hanging on the sides of the hill, with their quadrupled domes, and spires, and chains, and crosses, gilded with ducat gold and glittering in the sun, gave the whole city the appearance of golden splendour. The churches and monasteries have one large dome in the centre, with a spire surmounted by a cross, and several smaller domes around it, also with spires and crosses connected by pendant chains, and all gilded so purely that they never tarnish. We drove rapidly to the foot of the hill, and ascended by a long wooden paved road to the heart of the city.

During the whole of our last post our interest had been divided between the venerable city and the rogue Henri. My companion, who, by-the-way, spoke but little French disliked him from the first. We had long considered him in league with all the Jews and postmasters on the road, and had determined under no circumstances to take him farther than Chioff; but as we had hired him to Moscow, the difficulty was how to

get rid of him. He might take it into his head that, if we did not know when we had a good servant, he knew when he had good masters; but he was constantly grumbling about his seat, and calculated upon three or four days' rest at Chioff. So, as soon as we drove up to the door of the hotel, we told him to order breakfast and posthorses. He turned round as if he had not fully comprehended us. We repeated the order, and for the first time since he had been with us he showed something like agility in dismounting; fairly threw himself from the box, swore he would not ride another verst that day for a thousand rubles, and discharged us on the spot. We afterward paid him to his entire satisfaction, indemnifying him for the money he had squandered in paying his debts at Odessa, and found him more useful at Chioff than he had been at any time on the road. Indeed, we afterward learned what was rather ludicrous, viz., that he, our pilot and interpreter through the wilderness of Russia, knew but little more of Russian than we did ourselves. He could ask for posthorses and the ordinary necessities of life, count money, &c., but could not support a connected conversation, nor speak nor understand a long sentence. This changed our suspicions of his honesty into admiration of his impudence; but, in the mean time, when he discharged us, we should have been rather destitute if it had not been for the servant of a Russian traveller, who spoke French, and, taking our direction from him, we mounted a drosky and rode to the office of the diligence, which was situated in the Podolsk or lower town, and at which we found ourselves particularly well received by the proprietor. He said that the attempt to run a diligence was discouraging; that he had advertised two weeks,

and had not booked a single passenger; but, if he could get two, he was determined to try the experiment. We examined the vehicle, which was very large and convenient, and, satisfied that there was no danger of all the places being taken, we left him until we could make an effort to dispose of our carriage. Relieved from all anxiety as to our future movements, we again mounted our drosky. Ascending the hill, we passed the fountain where St. Vladimir baptized the first Russian converts; the spring is held sacred by the Christians now, and a column bearing a cross is erected over it, to commemorate the pious act and the ancient sovereignty of Chioff.

The early history of this city is involved in some obscurity. Its name is supposed to be derived from Kiovi or Kii, a Sarmatian word signifying heights or mountains; and its inhabitants, a Sarmatian tribe, were denominated Kivi or mountaineers. It is known to have been a place of consequence in the fifth century, when the Suevi, driven from their settlements on the Danube, established themselves here and at Novogorod. In the beginning of the tenth century it was the capital and most celebrated and opulent city in Russia, or in that part of Europe. Boleslaus the Terrible notched upon its "golden gate" his "miraculous sword," called by the monks "the sword of God," and the Poles entered and plundered it of its riches. In the latter part of the same century the capital of Russia again fell before the conquering arms of the Poles. Kiev was at that time the foster-child of Constantinople and the Eastern empire. The voluptuous Greeks had stored it with all the luxuries of Asia; the noble architecture of Athens was festooned with the gaudy tapestry of Lydia, and the

rough metal of Russian swords embossed with the polished gold of Ophir and Persia. Boleslaus II., shut up within the "golden gate" of this city of voluptuousness, quaffed the bowl of pleasure till its intoxicating draught degraded all the nobler energies of his nature. His army of warriors followed his example, and slept away month after month on the soft couches of Kiev; and in the language of the historian, as if they had eaten of the fabled fruit of the lotos-tree, at length forgot that their houses were without masters, their wives without husbands, and their children without parents.

But these tender relations were not in like manner obnoxious; and, after seven years of absence, the Poles were roused from their trance of pleasure by the tidings of a revolt among the women at home, who, tired of waiting their return, in revenge gave themselves up to the embraces of their slaves. Burning under the disgrace, the Poles hurried home to wreak their vengeance on wives and paramours; but they met at Warsaw a bloody resistance; the women, maddened by despair, urged on their lovers, many of them fighting in person, and seeking out on the battle-field their faithless husbands: an awful warning to married men!

For a long time Kiev was the prey alternately of the Poles, the Lithuanians, and the Tartars, until in 1686 it was finally ceded by the Poles to Russia. The city is composed of three distinct quarters; the old, with its Polish fortifications, containing the palace of the emperor, and being the court end; the Petcherk fortress, built by Peter the Great, with ditches and high ramparts, and an arsenal capable of containing eighty or a hundred thousand stand of arms; and the Podolsk, or business part, situated at the foot of the hill on the banks

of the Dnieper. It contains thirty thousand inhabitants, besides a large military garrison, partly of Cossack troops, and one pretty good hotel ; but no beds, and none of those soft couches which made the hardy Poles sleep away their senses ; and though a welcome resting-place for a traveller through the wild plains of Russia, it does not now possess any such attraction as to put in peril the faith and duties of husbands. By its position secluded from intercourse with strangers, Kiev is still thoroughly a Russian city, retaining in full force its Asiatic style of architecture ; and the old Russian, wedded to the manners and customs of his fathers, clings to it as a place which the hand of improvement has not yet reached ; among other relics of the olden time, the long beard still flourishes with the same solemn dignity as in the days of Peter the Great. Lying a hundred miles away from the direct road between Moscow and the Black Sea, few European travellers visit it ; and though several of them have done so since, perhaps I was the first American who ever passed through it.

We passed the morning in riding round to the numerous convents and churches, among which is the church of St. Sophia, the oldest in Russia, and, if not an exact model of the great St. Sophia of Constantinople, at least of Byzantine design ; and toward evening went to the emperor's garden. This garden is more than a mile in length, bounded on one side by the high precipitous bank of the hill, undulating in its surface, and laid out like an English park, with lawn, gravel-walks, and trees ; it contains houses of refreshment, arbours or summer-houses, and a summer theatre. At the foot of the hill flows the Dnieper, the ancient Borysthenes, on which, in former days, the descendants of Odin and Ruric de-

scended to plunder Constantinople. Two or three sloops were lying, as it were, asleep in the lower town, telling of a still interior country, and beyond was a boundless plain covered with a thick forest of trees. The view from this bank was unique and extraordinary, entirely different from anything I ever saw in natural scenery, and resembling more than anything else a boundless marine prospect.

At the entrance of the garden is an open square or table of land overlooking the plain, where, every evening at seven o'clock, the military band plays. The garden is the fashionable promenade, the higher classes resorting to it in carriages and on horseback, and the common people on foot; the display of equipages was not very striking, although there is something stylish in the Russian manner of driving four horses, the leaders with very long traces and a postillion; and soldiers and officers, with their splendid uniforms, caps, and plumes, added a brilliant effect.

Before the music began, all returned from the promenade or drive in the garden, and gathered in the square. It was a beautiful afternoon in June, and the assemblage was unusually large and brilliant; the carriages drew up in a line, the ladies let down the glasses, and the cavaliers dismounted, and talked and flirted with them just as in civilized countries. All Chioff was there, and the peasant in his dirty sheepskin jacket, the shopkeeper with his long surtout and beard, the postillion on his horse, the coachman on his box, the dashing soldier, the haughty noble and supercilious lady, touched by the same chord, forgot their temporal distinctions, and listened to the swelling strains of the music till the last notes died away. The whole mass was then in

motion, and in a few moments, except by a few stragglers, of whom I was one, the garden was deserted. At about ten o'clock I returned to my hotel. We had no beds, and slept in our cloaks on settees stuffed with straw and covered with leather. We had no coverlets; still, after four days and nights in a carriage, it was a luxury to have plenty of kicking room.

CHAPTER II.

A lucky Encounter.—Church of the Catacombs.—A Visit to the Saints.—A tender Parting.—Pilgrims.—Rough Treatment.—A Scene of Starvation.—Russian Serfs.—Devotion of the Serfs.—Approach to Moscow.

EARLY in the morning, while I was standing in the yard of the hotel, chaffering with some Jews about the sale of our carriage, an officer in a faded, threadbare uniform, with two or three ribands at his buttonhole and stars sparkling on his breast, came up, and, taking me by the hand, told me, in capital English, that he had just heard of the arrival of two English gentlemen, and had hurried down to see them; that he was a great admirer of the English, and happy to have an opportunity, in the interior of his own country, to show its hospitalities to the natives of the Island Queen. At the risk of losing the benefit of his attentions, I was obliged to disclaim my supposed English character, and to publish, in the heart of a grinding despotism, that I was a citizen of a free republic. Nor did I suffer for my candour; for, by one of those strange vagaries which sometimes happen, we cannot tell how or why, this officer

in the service of Russia had long looked to America and her republican government as the perfection of an ideal system. He was in Chioff only by accident. Wounded in the last campaign against the Turks, he had taken up his abode at Ismail, where, upon his pension and a pittance of his own, he was able to live respectably as a poor officer. With no friends or connexions, and no society at Ismail, his head seemed to have run principally upon two things, apparently having no connexion with each other, but intimately connected in his mind, viz., the British possessions in India and the United States of America ; and the cord that bound them together was the wide diffusion of the English language by means of these powerful agents. He told me more than I ever knew of the constitution and government of the East India Company, and their plan of operations ; and, in regard to our own country, his knowledge was astonishing ; he knew the names and character, and talked familiarly of all our principal men, from the time of Washington to the present day ; had read all our standard works, and was far more familiar with those of Franklin, Irving, &c., than I was ; in short, he told me that he had read every American book, pamphlet, or paper he could lay his hands on ; and so intimate was his knowledge of detail, that he mentioned Chestnut-street by name as one of the principal streets in Philadelphia. It may be supposed that I was not sorry to meet such a man in the heart of Russia. He devoted himself to us, and seldom left us, except at night, until we left the city.

After breakfast, accompanied by our new friend with as unpronounceable a name as the best in Russia, we visited the catacombs of the Petcherskoi monastery.

I have before remarked that Chioff is the holy city of the Russians, and the crowds of pilgrims we met at every turn in the streets constantly reminded us that this was the great season of the pilgrimage. I was but imperfectly acquainted with the Russian character, but in no one particular had I been so ignorant as in regard to their religious impressions. I had seen Italian, Greek, and Turkish devotees, but the Russian surpassed them all; and, though deriving their religion from strangers, they exceed the punctilious Greeks themselves in the observance of its minutest forms. Censurable, indeed, would he be considered who should pass, in city or in highway, the figure of the cross, the image of the Virgin, or any of the numerous family of saints, without taking off his hat and making on his breast the sacred sign of the cross; and in a city like Chioff, where every turn presents some new object claiming their worship, the eyes of our drosky boy were rapidly turning from one side to the other, and his hand was almost constantly in a quick mechanical motion.

The Church of the Catacombs, or the Cathedral of the Assumption, attached to the monastery, stands a little out of the city, on the banks of the Dnieper. It was founded in ten hundred and seventy-three, and has seven golden domes with golden spires, and chains connecting them. The dome of the belfry, which rises above the hill to the height of about three hundred feet, and above the Dnieper to that of five hundred and eighty-six, is considered by the Russians a chef d'œuvre of architecture. It is adorned with Doric and Ionic columns and Corinthian pilasters; the whole interior bears the venerable garb of antiquity, and is richly ornamented with gold, silver, and precious stones and paintings; in-

deed, it is altogether very far superior to any Greek church I had then seen.

In the immense catacombs under the monastery lie the unburied bodies of the Russian saints, and year after year thousands and tens of thousands come from the wilds of Siberia and the confines of Tartary to kneel at their feet and pray. In one of the porches of the church we bought wax tapers, and, with a long procession of pilgrims, bareheaded and with lighted tapers in our hands, descended a long wooden staircase to the mouth of the catacomb. On each side along the staircase was ranged a line of kneeling devotees, of the same miserable description I had so often seen about the churches in Italy and Greece. Entering the excavated passages of the catacombs, the roof of which was black from the smoke of candles, we saw on each side, in niches in the walls, and in open coffins, enveloped in wrappers of cloth and silk, ornamented with gold and silver, the bodies of the Russian saints. These saints are persons who have led particularly pure and holy lives, and by reason thereof have ascended into heaven, where they are supposed to exercise an influence with the Father and Son; and their bodies are left unburied that their brethren may come to them for intercession, and, seeing their honours after death, study to imitate them in the purity of their lives. The bodies are laid in open coffins, with the stiffened hands so placed as to receive the kisses of pilgrims, and on their breasts are written their names, and sometimes a history of their virtuous actions. But we saw there other and worse things than these, monuments of wild and desperate fanaticism; for besides the bodies of saints who had died at God's appointed time, in one passage is a range of small windows, where

men had with their own hands built themselves in with stones against the wall, leaving open only a small hole by which to receive their food; and died with the impious thought that they were doing their Maker good service. These little windows close their dwelling and their tomb; and the devoted Russian, while he kneels before them, believes that their unnatural death has purchased for them everlasting life, and place and power among the spirits of the blessed.

We wandered a long time in this extraordinary burial-place, everywhere strewed with the kneeling figures of praying pilgrims. At every turn we saw hundreds from the farthest parts of the immense empire of Russia; perhaps at that time more than three thousand were wandering in these sepulchral chambers.

The last scene I shall never forget. More than a hundred were assembled in a little chapel, around which were arranged the bodies of men who had died in peculiar sanctity. All were kneeling on the rocky floor, an old priest, with a long white beard streaming down his breast, was in the midst of them, and all there, even to the little children, were listening with rapt attention, as if he were preaching to them matters of eternal moment. There was no hypocrisy or want of faith in that vast sepulchre; surrounded by their sainted dead, they were searching their way to everlasting life, and in all honesty believed that they saw the way before them. We ascended once more to the regions of upper air, and stopped a few moments in the courtyard of the monastery, where the beggar pilgrims were eating the hard bread distributed to them by the monks from the bounty of government. No man seemed more relieved than the major. He was a liberal in religion as well as

in politics, but he crossed himself everywhere most devoutly, to avoid, as he said, offending the prejudices of his countrymen, though once he rather scandalized a group of pilgrims by cross-questioning a monk about a new saint, who seemed to be receiving more than a usual share of veneration, and who, he said, had been canonized since he was there last.

But there is a time for all things, and nothing is more absolutely fixed by Nature's laws than a time for dinner. Almost at the first moment of our acquaintance the major had told me of an engraving representing a scene in *New-York*, which was to be found at a second or third raté hotel, and I proposed to him, in compliment to the honest publican who had the good taste to have such a picture in his house, to go there and dine. We went, and in a large room, something like a barroom in our hotels, saw on one of the walls, in a black wooden frame, a gaudy and flaring engraving representing the pulling down of the statue of George the Second in the Bowling Green. The Bowling Green was associated with my earliest recollections. It had been my playground when a boy; hundreds of times I had climbed over its fence for my ball, and I was one of a band of boys who held on to it long after the corporation invaded our rights. Captain Cook mentions the effect produced upon his crew by finding at one of the savage islands he visited a silver spoon marked "London;" my feelings were, in a small way, of the same nature. The grouping of the picture was rude and grotesque, the ringleader being a long negro stripped to his trousers, and straining with all his might upon a rope, one end of which was fastened to the head of the statue, and the other tied around his own waist, his white teeth and the

whites of his eyes being particularly conspicuous on a heavy ground of black. It was a poor specimen of art, but it was a home scene; we drew up our table opposite the picture, and here, in the very headquarters of despotism, I found a liberal spirit in an officer wearing the uniform of the autocrat, who pledged me in the toast, "Success to liberty throughout the world."

I had another occupation, which savoured more of home, and served to keep my faculties from rusting; and that was the sale of our carriage. We had made a calculation, and found that it would be cheaper, to say nothing of other advantages, to give it away, and take the diligence to Moscow, than go on posting. We accordingly offered it for sale, and every time we returned to the house found a group of Jews examining it. The poor thing found no favour in their eyes; they told us that we had been riding in it at peril of our lives; that we might be thankful it had not broken down on the road; and, in short, that it was worth nothing except for old iron, and for that it was worth forty-five rubles, or about *nine dollars*. We could not stand this. It had cost us one hundred and forty less than a week before, was cheap at that, and as good now as when we bought it. On the eve of departure, therefore, we offered it to our landlord for three days' board; but the old Turk (he was a Jew turned Christian, and in his regenerated worse than his natural state) refused our offer, thinking that we would go away and leave it on his hands. But we resolved to burn it first; and while hesitating about offering it to our friend the major, he relieved us from all delicacy by telling us that he did not want it, and had no horses to put to it; to save us from imposition, he would willingly give us the full

value, out he was not worth the money. He had, however, a piece of fifty rubles, or about ten dollars, in his pocket, and, if we would take that, he would keep the carriage as a souvenir. We gladly accepted his offer, and had the satisfaction of finding that we had grievously disappointed both the Jews and our landlord.

In the morning the proprietor of the diligence, learning that we had sold our vehicle, raised the price of places fifty rubles apiece; the major heard of it, and insisted upon our taking back the carriage, when the proprietor took another tone, talked of the expense of sending his huge vehicle with only two passengers, and we listened and assented. We started to accompany him, and just at the door of the hotel saw two runaway horses coming furiously down the street with a drosky, and an officer entangled and dragging on the ground. We picked him up and carried him into the hotel. He was a noble-looking man, who but a few minutes before had attracted my attention by his proud and manly bearing, now a miserable mangled object, his clothes torn, his plume soiled with mud, and his face covered with dust and blood, and, when we left, it was uncertain whether he would live or die.

The major accompanied us to the office of the diligence, and our parting was rather tender; he rubbed his mustache on both my cheeks, wrote his name in my memorandum-book, and I gave him my address; he said that our visit had been an interlude relieving the dull monotony of his life; that we were going to new scenes, and would soon forget him, but he would not forget us. Nor shall I forget him, although it is not probable that he and I will ever meet again.

We took our seats in the diligence for Moscow, and

set off with an uncommon degree of satisfaction at having got rid of posting and of Henri, and, with them, of all our troubles. We had nothing to do, no wrangling with postmasters, no cheating to undergo from Jews, and were in that happy state which made the honest Hibernian indifferent to an upset or a breakdown; that is to say, we were merely passengers. With great pomp and circumstance we drove through the principal streets, to advise the Knickerbockers of Chioff of the actual departure of the long-talked-of diligence, the conducteur sounding his trumpet, and the people stopping in the streets and running to the doors to see the extraordinary spectacle.

We descended the long wooden road to the river, and crossed the Dnieper on a bridge about half a mile long. On the opposite bank I turned for the last time to the sacred city, and I never saw anything more unique and strikingly beautiful than the high, commanding position of "this city on a hill," crowned with its golden cupolas and domes, that reflected the sun with dazzling brightness.

For a short distance the country was rather undulating, but soon settled into the regular steppe. We rolled on all day without anything to annoy us or even to interest us, except processions of pilgrims on their way to Chioff. They travelled on foot in bands of one or two hundred, men, women, and children, headed by a white-bearded monk, barefooted, and leaning on a staff. During the night I was roused by a loud chant, and, looking out, saw a group of more than a hundred pilgrims gathered round a fire, with an old monk in the midst of them, breaking the stillness of night with songs of devotion; and all the night long, as we rode swiftly by, I saw by

the bright moonlight groups of forty, fifty, or a hundred lying by the roadside asleep under the trees. More than fifty thousand pilgrims that year visited the catacombs of Kiev, coming from every part of the immense empire of Russia, and many from Kamschatka and the most distant region of Siberia, performing the whole journey on foot, seldom sleeping under a roof, and living upon the precarious charity of the miserable peasants on the road. I have since seen the gathering of pilgrims at Jerusalem, and the whole body moving together from the gates of the city to bathe in the Jordan, and I have seen the great caravan of forty thousand true believers tracking their desolate way through the deserts of Arabia to the tomb of the Prophet at Mecca; but I remember, as if they were before me now, the groups of Russian pilgrims strewed along the road and sleeping under the pale moonlight, the bare earth their bed, the heavens their only covering.

In the morning we stopped at a little town, where the posthouse had in front four Corinthian columns supporting a balcony. Inside, mats were placed against the broken windows, the walls were rough logs, the floor of mud, with pigs and children disputing its possession, and the master and mistress stood in special need of the purifying influence of a Russian bath. We brought the teurn out on the balcony, and had a cow brought up and milked in our presence. After breakfast we lighted our pipes and strolled up the street. At the upper end, an old man in a civil uniform hailed us from the opposite side, and crossed over to meet us; supposing him to be some dignitary disposed to show us the civilities of the town, we waited to receive him with all becoming respect; but, as he approached, were rather startled by

the loud tone of his voice and the angry expression of his face, and more so when, as soon as within reach, he gave my pipe-stick a severe rap with his cane, which knocked it out of my mouth, broke the bowl, and scattered the contents on the ground. I picked up the stick, and should, perhaps, have laid it over his head but for his gray hairs; and my companion, seeing him tread out the sparks of fire, recollected that there was a severe penalty in Russia against smoking in the streets. The houses are all of wood; whole villages and towns are often burned down at once, and probably the old man had begun by a civil intimation to that effect; but, indignant at my quietly smoking in his face, had used more summary measures. He was in a perfect fury; and calling at the top of his voice to a man up the street, the latter went off with such a suspicious looking-for-a-police-officer movement, that we hurried back to the diligence, which happened to be ready and waiting for us, and started from the town on a full run.

That night, in a miserable posthouse in a miserable village, we found an old billiard-table. It seemed strangely out of place, and I had a great curiosity to know how it had found its way there; but it was twelve o'clock, and all were asleep but the postillion. I can give no account of the rest of the night's work. I had a large cushioned seat of the diligence to myself, certainly the softest bed I had yet had in Russia; and when I put my feet out of the window, it was so comfortable that I felt myself in some danger of falling into luxurious habits.

At daylight we arrived in a large village, the inhabitants of which were not yet stirring, and the streets were strewn with peasants, grim, yellow-bearded fellows, in

sheepskin dresses and caps, lying on their backs asleep, each of them with a log of wood under his head for a pillow. I descended from the diligence, and found that



Russian Village.

the whole village consisted of a single street, with log-houses on each side, having their gable ends in front; the doors were all open, and I looked in and saw men and women with all their clothes on, pigs, sheep, and children strewed about the floor.

In every house was the image of the Panagia, or all holy Virgin, or the picture of some tutelary saint, the face only visible, the rest covered with a tin frame, with a lamp or taper burning before it; and regularly as the serf rose he prostrated himself and made his orisons at this domestic shrine.

About noon we passed the chateau and grounds of a seigneur; belonging to the chateau was a large church standing in a conspicuous situation, with a green dome, surmounted by the Greek cross; and round it were the miserable and filthy habitations of his slaves. Entering the village, we saw a spectacle of wretchedness and misery seldom surpassed even on the banks of the Nile. The whole population was gathered in the streets, in a state of absolute starvation. The miserable serfs had not raised enough to supply themselves with food, and men of all ages, half-grown boys, and little children were prowling the streets or sitting in the doorways, ravenous with hunger, and waiting for the agent to come down from the chateau and distribute among them bread.

I had found in Russia many interesting subjects of comparison between that country and my own, but it was with deep humiliation I felt that the most odious feature in that despotic government found a parallel in ours. At this day, with the exception of Russia, some of the West India Islands, and the republic of the United States, every country in the civilized world can respond to the proud boast of the English common law, that the moment a slave sets foot on her soil he is free. I respect the feelings of others and their vested rights, and would be the last to suffer those feelings or those rights to be wantonly violated; but I do not hesitate to say that, abroad, slavery stands as a dark blot upon our national character. There it will not admit of any palliation; it stands in glaring contrast with the spirit of our free institutions; it belies our words and our hearts; and the American who would be most prompt to repel any calumny upon his country withers under this reproach, and writhes with mortification when the taunt is hurled at the otherwise stainless flag of the free republic. I was forcibly struck with a parallel between the white serfs of the north of Europe and African bondsmen at home. The Russian boor, generally wanting the comforts which are supplied to the negro on our best-ordered plantations, appeared to me to be not less degraded in intellect, character, and personal bearing. Indeed, the marks of physical and personal degradation were so strong, that I was insensibly compelled to abandon certain theories not uncommon among my countrymen at home, in regard to the intrinsic superiority of the white race over all others. Perhaps, too, this impression was aided by my having previously met with Africans of intelligence and capacity, standing upon a footing of per-

fect equality as soldiers and officers in the Greek army and the sultan's.

The serfs of Russia differ from slaves with us in the important particular that they belong to the soil, and cannot be sold except with the estate; they may change masters, but cannot be torn from their connexions or their birthplace. One sixth of the whole peasantry of Russia, amounting to six or seven millions, belong to the crown, and inhabit the imperial demesne, and pay an annual tax. In particular districts, many have been enfranchised, and become burghers and merchants; and the liberal and enlightened policy of the present emperor is diffusing a more general system of melioration among these subjects of his vast empire. The rest of the serfs belong to the nobles, and are the absolute property and subject to the absolute control of their masters, as much as the cattle on their estates. Some of the seigneurs possess from seventy to more than a hundred thousand; and their wealth depends upon the skill and management with which the labour of these serfs is employed. Sometimes the seigneur sends the most intelligent to Petersburg or Moscow to learn some handicraft, and then employs them on his own estates, hires them out, or allows them to exercise their trade on their own account on payment of an annual sum. And sometimes, too, he gives the serf a passport, under which he is protected all over Russia, settles in a city, and engages in trade, and very often accumulates enough to ransom himself and his family. Indeed, there are many instances of a serf's acquiring a large property, and even rising to eminence. But he is always subject to the control of his master; and I saw at Moscow an old mongik who had acquired a very large fortune, but was

still a slave. His master's price for his freedom had advanced with his growing wealth, and the poor serf, unable to bring himself to part with his hard earnings, was then rolling in wealth with a collar round his neck ; struggling with the inborn spirit of freedom, and hesitating whether to die a beggar or a slave.

The Russian serf is obliged to work for his master but three days in the week ; the other three he may work for himself on a portion of land assigned to him by law on his master's estate. He is never obliged to work on Sunday, and every saint's day or fête day of the church is a holyday. This might be supposed to give him an opportunity of elevating his character and condition ; but, wanting the spirit of a free agent, and feeling himself the absolute property of another, he labours grudgingly for his master, and for himself barely enough to supply the rudest necessities of life and pay his tax to the seigneur. A few rise above their condition, but millions labour like beasts of burden, content with bread to put in their mouths, and never even thinking of freedom. A Russian nobleman told me that he believed, if the serfs were all free, he could cultivate his estate to better advantage by hired labour ; and I have no doubt a dozen Connecticut men would cultivate more ground than a hundred Russian serfs, allowing their usual non-working days and holydays. They have no interest in the soil, and the desolate and uncultivated wastes of Russia show the truth of the judicious reflection of Catharine II., "that agriculture can never flourish in that nation where the husbandman possesses no property."

It is from this great body of peasantry that Russia recruits her immense standing army, or, in case of invasion, raises in a moment a vast body of soldiers.

Every person in Russia entitled to hold land is known to the government, as well as the number of peasants on his estate ; and, upon receiving notice of an imperial order to that effect, the numbers required by the levy are marched forthwith from every part of the empire to the places of rendezvous appointed. It might be asked, What have these men to fight for ? They have no country, and are brought up on immense levels, wanting the rocks, rivers, and mountains that inspire local attachments. It is a singular fact, that, with the Russian serf, there is always an unbounded love for him who stands at the head of the system of oppression under which they groan, the emperor, whom they regard as their protector against the oppression of their immediate masters ; but to whatever cause it may be ascribed, whether inability to estimate the value of any change in their condition, or a feeling of actual love for the soil on which they were born, during the invasion of Napoleon the serfs of Russia presented a noble spectacle ; and the spirit of devotion which animated the corps of ten thousand in the north extended to the utmost bounds of the empire. They received orders to march from St. Petersburg to meet the advance of the French army ; the emperor reviewed them, and is said to have shed tears at their departure. Arrived at the place appointed, Witgenstein ordered them to fall back to a certain point, but they answered, " No ; the last promise we made the emperor our father was, that we would never fly before the enemy, and we keep our word." Eight thousand of their number died on the spot ; and the spirit which animated them fired the serfs throughout the whole empire. The scholar may sneer, but I defy him to point to a nobler page in Grecian or Roman history.

I shall make amends for this long discussion by hurrying on to Moscow. We rode hundreds of miles without meeting a hill; the country was bare of trees, and almost everywhere presenting the same appearance. We saw the first disk of the sun peeping out of the earth, watched it while soaring on its daily round, and, without a bush to obstruct the view, saw it sink below the horizon; and woke up at all times of night and saw the stars

"Rolling like living cars of light
For gods to journey by."

The principal and only large towns on our road were Orel and Toula, the former containing a population of four or five thousand, and presenting an imposing display of churches and monasteries gaudily painted and with gilded domes; the houses were principally of wood, painted yellow. Toula is the largest manufacturing town, and is called the Sheffield of Russia, being particularly celebrated for its cutlery. Everywhere the diligence created a great sensation; the knowing ones said it would never do; but at Orel one spirited individual said if we would wait three days for him he would go on with us. It can hardly seem credible, in our steamboat and railroad community, that a public conveyance could roll on for seven days and nights, through many villages and towns, toward the capital of an immense empire, and not take in a single way-passenger; but such was the fact; and on the morning of the seventh day, alone, as we started from Chioff, we were approaching the burned and rebuilt capital of the Czars, Moscow with gilded cupolas, the holy Moscow, the sanctified city, the Jerusalem of Russia, beloved of God, and dear to men.

CHAPTER III.

Moscow.—A severe Operation.—An Exile by Accident.—Meeting with an Emigré.—A civil Stranger.—A Spy.—The Kremlin.—Sepulchres of the Czars.—The great Bell.—The great Gun.—Precious Relics.

AT daylight we arrived at the last post; and here, for the first time, we saw evidences of our approach to a great city. Four or five travelling-carriages were waiting for horses, some of which had been waiting all night; but our diligence being a "public accommodation," we were preferred, and had the first that came in. We took our places for the last time in the diligence, and passed two or three fine chateaux, our curiosity and interest increasing as we approached, until, at about five versts from Moscow, as we reached the summit of a gentle eminence, the whole city broke upon us at one view, situated in the midst of a great plain, and covering an extent of more than thirty versts. Moscow is emphatically the city of churches, containing more than six hundred, many of which have five or six domes, with steeples, and spires, and crosses, gilded and connected together with golden chains like those of Chioff. Its convents, too, are almost innumerable, rivalling the churches in size and magnificence, and even to us, coming directly from the capital of the Eastern empire, presenting a most striking and extraordinary appearance. As we passed the barrier, two of the most conspicuous objects on each side were the large Greek convents, enclosed by high walls, with noble trees growing above them; and as we rode

through the wide and showy streets, the first thing that struck me as strange, and, in this inhospitable climate (always associated in my mind with rude and wintry scenes), as singularly beautiful, was the profusion of plants and flowers, with the remarkable degree of taste and attention given to their cultivation. In Greece and Turkey I had seen the rarest plants and flowers literally "wasting their sweetness on the desert air;" while here, in the heart of an inhospitable country, every house had a courtyard or garden, and in front a light open portico or veranda, ornamented with plants, and shrubs, and flowers, forced into a glowing though unnatural beauty. The whole appearance of the city is Asiatic; and as the exhibition of flowers in front of the better class of houses was almost universal, Moscow seemed basking in the mild climate of Southern Asia, rioting in its brief period of vernal existence, and forgetting that, in a few weeks, a frost would come and cover their beauty with the dreary drapery of winter.

At the office of the diligence my companion and myself separated. He went to a hotel kept by an English woman, with English company, and I believe, too, with English comfort, and I rode to the Hotel Germanica, an old and favourite stopping-place with the Russian seigneurs when they come up from their estates in the country. Having secured my room, I mounted a drosky and hurried to a bath. Riding out to the suburbs, the drosky boy stopped at a large wooden building, pouring forth steam from every chink and crevice. At the entrance stood several half-naked men, one of whom led me to an apartment to undress, and then conducted me to another, in one end of which were a furnace and apparatus for generating steam. I was then familiar with

the Turkish bath, but the worst I had known was like the breath of the gentle south wind compared with the heat of this apartment. The operator stood me in the middle of the floor, opened the upper door of the stove, and dashed into it a bucketful of water, which sent forth volumes of steam like a thick fog into every part of the room, and then laid me down on a platform about three feet high and rubbed my body with a mop dipped in soap and hot water; then he raised me up, and deluged me with hot water, pouring several tubfuls on my head; then laid me down again, and scrubbed me with soap and water from my head to my heels, long enough, if the thing were possible, to make a blackamoor white; then gave me another sousing with hot water, and another scrubbing with pure water, and then conducted me up a flight of steps to a high platform, stretched me out on a bench within a few feet of the ceiling, and commenced whipping me with twigs of birch, with the leaves on them, dipped in hot water. It was hot as an oven where he laid me down on the bench; the vapour, which almost suffocated me below, ascended to the ceiling, and, finding no avenue of escape, gathered round my devoted body, fairly scalding and blistering me; and when I removed my hands from my face, I felt as if I had carried away my whole profile. I tried to hold out to the end, but I was burning, scorching, and consuming. In agony I cried out to my tormentor to let me up; but he did not understand me, or was loath to let me go, and kept thrashing me with the bunch of twigs until, perfectly desperate, I sprang off the bench, tumbled him over, and descended to the floor. Snow, snow, a region of eternal snow seemed paradise; but my tormentor had not done with me; and, as I was hurrying to the

door, he dashed over me a tub of cold water. I was so hot that it seemed to hiss as it touched me ; he came at me with another, and at that moment I could imagine, what had always seemed a traveller's story, the high satisfaction and perfect safety with which the Russian in mid winter rushes from his hot bath and rolls himself in the snow. The grim features of my tormentor relaxed as he saw the change that came over me. I withdrew to my dressing-room, dozed an hour on the settee, and went out a new man. In half an hour I stood in the palace of the Czars, within the walls of the Kremlin.

Toward evening I returned to my hotel. In all the large hotels in Russia it is the custom for every man to dine in his own apartment. Travelling alone, I always avoided this when I could, as, besides my dislike of the thing itself, it prevented my making acquaintances and acquiring such information as I needed in a strange city ; and I was particularly averse to dine alone the first day of my arrival at Moscow ; but it was the etiquette of the house to do so, and as I had a letter of introduction which I intended to deliver, from Count Woronzow to Prince Galitzin, the governor of Moscow, I was bound to make some sacrifice for the credit of my acquaintance. After the table was spread, however, finding it too severe a trial, I went down stairs and invited myself to dine with my landlord. He was a German of about fifty-five or sixty, tall, stout, with gray hair, a frank, manly expression, and great respectability of appearance and manners ; and before the dinner was over I regarded him emphatically as what a Frenchman would call *un brave homme*. He had been in Russia during the whole of the French invasion, and, among the other incidents of a stirring life, had been sent in exile to Siberia ; and the

curious part of it was, that he was sent there by mistake. Rather an awkward mistake, though, as he said, not so bad as being knouted or hanged by mistake; and in his case it turned out a rather interesting adventure. He was taken by the French as a Russian spy, and retaken by the Russians as a French spy, when, as he said, he did not care a fig for either of them. He was hurried off to Siberia, but on the journey succeeded in convincing the officer who escorted the prisoners that there was error in the case, and on his arrival was merely detained in exile, without being put to hard labour, until, through the medium of friends, he had the matter brought before the proper tribunal, and the mistake corrected, when he came back post, in company with a Russian officer, smoking his pipe all the way, at the expense of the government. He gave me many interesting particulars in regard to that celebrated country, its mines, the sufferings of the noble exiles; and much, also, that was new to me, touching its populousness and wealth, and the comfort and luxury of a residence there. He spoke of Tobolsk as a large, gay, and populous city, containing hotels, theatres, and all kinds of places of amusement. The exiles, being many of them of rank, have introduced there all the luxuries of the capital, and life at Tobolsk is much the same as life at Moscow.

As the rage for travelling is excited by hearing from the lips of a traveller stories of the countries he has visited, before dinner was over I found myself infected with a strong disposition for a journey to Siberia. Small matters, however, produce great changes in the current of a man's feelings, and in a few moments I had entirely forgotten Siberia, and was carried directly home. While we were smoking our pipes, an old gen-

Vol. II.—E

tleman entered, of singularly aristocratic appearance, whom my host received with the greatest consideration and respect, addressing him as the Marquis de P——. He was a Frenchman, an old militaire, and a noble specimen of a race almost extinct; tall, thin, and gray-headed, wearing a double-breasted blue frockcoat, buttoned up to the throat, with a cane in his hand and a red riband in his buttonhole, the decoration of the Knights of Malta; and when my host introduced me as an American traveller arrived that day in Moscow, he welcomed me with more than the usual forms of courtesy, and told me that, far off as it was, and little as he knew of it, he almost regarded America as his own country; that, on the downfall of "the emperor," and in a season of universal scattering, some of his nearest relatives, particularly a sister married to a fellow-soldier and his dearest friend, had taken refuge on the other side of the Atlantic; that, eighteen years before, he had met an American secretary of legation who knew them, but since that time he had not heard from them, and did not know whether they were living or dead. I asked him the name, with very little expectation of being able to give him any information about them; and it was with no small degree of pleasure that I found I was particularly acquainted with the condition of his relatives. His brother-in-law and old comrade was dead, but I brought him a satisfaction to which he had long been a stranger, by telling him that his sister was still living, occupying a large property in a neighbouring state, surrounded by a family of children, in character and standing ranking among the first in our country. They were intimately connected with the family of one of my most intimate friends, letters to and from differ-

ent members of which had very often passed through my hands ; I knew the names of all his nieces, and personally one of his nephews, a lieutenant, and one of the most promising officers in our navy ; and about a year before I had accompanied the friends to whom I refer on a visit to these relatives. At Philadelphia I left them under the charge of the lieutenant ; and on my return from Washington, according to agreement, the lieutenant came down to an intersecting point on the railroad to take me home with him ; but circumstances prevented my going, and much as I regretted my disappointment then, I regretted it far more now, as otherwise I might have gladdened the old man's heart by telling him that within a year I had seen his sister. His own history was brief. Born to the possession of rank and fortune, and having won honours and decorations by long service in the field, and risen to the rank of inspector-general in the army of Napoleon, he was taken in the campaign against Russia in eighteen hundred and thirteen, and sent a prisoner of war to Moscow, where he had remained ever since. Immediately on their arrival, his brother-in-law and sister had written to him from America, telling him that, with the wreck of their fortune, they had purchased a large landed estate, and begging him to come over and share their abundance ; but, as he told me, he scorned to eat the bread of idleness and dependance ; manfully turned to account the advantages of an accomplished education ; and now, at the advanced age of seventy-eight, sustained himself by his pencil, an honoured guest at every table, and respected by the most distinguished inhabitants of Moscow. He had accidentally given up his rooms, a few days before, and was residing temporarily at the

same hotel with myself. He was much agitated by this unexpected intelligence from friends he never expected to hear of more, and left me with a promise to call upon me early in the morning.

Too much interested myself to go back to Siberia with my host, I went to the French theatre. The play was some little every-day thing, and the house but thinly attended. I took my seat in the pit, which was on a dead level, instead of ascending from the stage, containing large cushioned seats, and sprinkled with officers talking with ladies in the boxes above. At the end of the first act, as whole benches were empty above me, I moved up to put myself nearer a pair of bright eyes that were beaming from the box upon a pair of epaulettes below. I was hardly seated before one of the understrappers came up and whispered, or rather muttered, something in my ear. As I did not understand a word he said, and his manner was exceedingly rude and ungracious, I turned my back upon him and looked at the lady with the bright eyes. The fellow continued muttering in my ear, and I began to be seriously annoyed and indignant, when a Frenchman sitting two or three benches behind me came up, and, in an imperious tone, ordered him away. He then cursed the Russians as a set of canaille, from the greatest seigneurs to the lowest serf; remarked that he saw I was a stranger, and, with the easy freedom of a man of the world, took a seat by my side. He was above six feet high, about thirty-three or thirty-four years of age, in robust health, with a large pair of whiskers, rather overdressed, and of manners good, though somewhat imperious and bordering on the swagger. He seemed perfectly at home in the theatre; knew all the actors,

and, before the evening was over, offered to introduce me to all the actresses. I was under obligations to him, if not for the last offer, at least for relieving me from the impertinent doorkeeper; and, when the curtain fell, accepted his invitation to go to a restaurant and take a petit souper. I accompanied him to the Restaurant au coin du pont des Mareschaux, which I afterward ascertained to be the first in Moscow. He was perfectly at home with the carte, knew exactly what to order, and, in fact, he was a man of great general information, perfectly familiar with all continental Europe, geographically and politically, and particularly at home in Moscow; and he offered his services in showing me all that was curious and interesting. We sat together more than two hours, and in our rambling and discursive conversation I could not help remarking that he seemed particularly fond of railing at the government, its tyranny and despotism, and appealing to me, as an American and a liberal, to sustain him. I did not think anything of it then, though in a soldier under Charles the Tenth, driven out, as he said, by the revolution of July, it was rather strange; but, at any rate, either from a spirit of contradiction or because I had really a good feeling toward everything in Russia, I disagreed with him throughout; he took upon himself the whole honours of the entertainment, scolded the servants, called in the landlord, and, as I observed, after a few words with him, went out without paying. I saw that the landlord knew him, and that there was something constrained and peculiar in his behaviour. I must confess, however, that I did not notice these things at the time so clearly as when I was induced to recur to them by after circumstances, for we went out of the house the

best friends in the world ; and, as it was then raining, we took a drosky and rode home together, with our arms around each other's neck, and my cloak thrown over us both. About two o'clock, in a heavy rain, I stopped at my hotel, bade him good-night, and lent him my cloak to go home with.

The reader, perhaps, smiles at my simplicity, but he is wrong in his conjecture ; my cloak came home the next morning, and was my companion and only covering many a night afterward. My friend followed it, sat with me a few minutes, and was taking his departure, having made an appointment to call for me at twelve o'clock, when there was a knock at the door, and my friend the marquis entered. I presented them to each other, and the latter was in the act of bending his body with the formality of a gentleman of the old school, when he caught a full view of my friend of the theatre, and, breaking off his unfinished bow, recovered his erect position, and staring from him to me, and from me to him, seemed to demand an explanation. I had no explanation to give, nor had my friend, who, cocking his hat on one side, and brushing by the marquis with more than his usual swagger, stamped down stairs. The marquis looked after him till he was at the foot of the stairs, and then turning to me, asked how, in the name of wonder, I had already contrived to pick up such an acquaintance. I told him the history of our meeting at the theatre, our supper at the restaurant, and our loving ride home, to which he listened with breathless attention ; and after making me tax my memory for the particulars of the conversation at the restaurant, told me that my friend was a disgrace to his country ; that he had, no doubt, been obliged to leave France for some rascality,

and was now entertained by the Emperor of Russia as a *spy*, particularly upon his own countrymen ; that he was well fed and clothed, and had the *entrée* of all the theatres and public houses without paying. With the earnestness of a man long used to a despotic government, and to seeing slight offences visited with terrible punishments, the marquis congratulated me upon not having fallen into what he called the snare laid for me.

It is almost impossible for an American to believe that even in Russia he incurs any risk in speaking what he thinks ; he is apt to regard the stories of summary punishment for freedom of speech as bugbears or by-gone things. In my own case, even when men looked cautiously around the room and then spoke in whispers, I could not believe that there was any danger. Still I had become prudent enough not to talk with any unnecessary indiscretion of the constituted authorities, and, even in writing home to my friends, not to say anything that could prejudice me if the letter should fall into wrong hands ; and now, although I did not consider that I had run any great risk, I was rather pleased that I had said nothing exceptionable ; and though I had no apprehension, particularly since I had been put on my guard, I determined to drop my new acquaintance, and did not consider myself bound to observe any great courtesy in the mode of doing it. I had had a supper, which it was my original intention to return with a dinner ; but I did not consider myself under any obligation to him for civilities shown in the exercise of his despicable calling. The first time I met him I made no apology for having been out when he called according to appointment, and did not ask him to come again. I continued to meet him in the streets and at every public

place, but our greetings became colder and colder, and the day before I left Moscow we brushed against each other without speaking at all. So much for acquaintances who, after an intimacy of three or four hours, had ridden home under the same cloak, with their arms around each other's neck.

But to return: as soon as the marquis left me I again went to the Kremlin, to me the great, I had almost said the only, object of interest in Moscow. I always detested a cicerone; his bowing, fawning, and prating annoyed me; and all through Italy, with my map and guide-book under my arm, I was in the habit of rambling about alone. I did the same at Moscow, and again walked to the Kremlin unaccompanied. Unlike many of the places I had visited, all the interest I had felt in looking forward to the Kremlin was increased when I stood within its walls. I had thought of it as the rude and barbarous palace of the Czars; but I found it one of the most extraordinary, beautiful, and magnificent objects I ever beheld. I rambled over it several times with admiration, without attempting to comprehend it all. Its commanding situation on the banks of the Moskwa river; its high and venerable walls; its numerous battlements, towers, and steeples; its magnificent and gorgeous palaces; its cathedrals, churches, monasteries, and belfries, with their gilded, coppered, and tin-plated domes; its mixture of barbarism and decay, magnificence and ruins; its strong contrast of architecture, including the Tartarian, Hindoo, Chinese, and Gothic; and, rising above all, the lofty tower of Ivan Veliki, with its golden ball reflecting the sun with dazzling brilliancy, all together exhibited a beauty, grandeur, and magnificence strange and indescribable.

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The Kremlin is "the heart" and "sacred place" of Moscow, once the old fortress of the Tartars, and now the centre of the modern city. It is nearly triangular



The Kremlin.

n form, enclosed by a high brick wall painted white, and nearly two miles in extent, and is in itself a city. It has five gates, at four of which there are high watch-towers. The fifth is "our Saviour's," or the Holy Gate, through whose awe-commanding portals no male, not even the emperor and autocrat of all the Russias, can pass except with uncovered head and bended body. Bareheaded, I entered by this gate, and passed on to a noble esplanade, commanding one of the most interesting views of Moscow, and having in front the range of palaces of the Czars. I shall not attempt to describe these palaces. They are a combination of every variety of taste and every order of architecture, Grecian, Gothic, Italian, Tartar, and Hindoo, rude, fanciful, grotesque, gorgeous, magnificent, and beautiful. The churches, monasteries, arsenals, museum, and public buildings are erected with no attempt at regularity of design, and in the same wild confusion of architecture. There are no regular streets, but three open places or squares, and

abundance of room for carriages and foot passengers, with which, in summer afternoons, it is always thronged.

Having strolled for some time about the Kremlin, I entered the Cathedral of the Assumption, the most splendid church in Moscow. It was founded in 1325, and rebuilt in 1472. It is loaded with gorgeous and extravagant ornaments. The iconastos or screen which divides the sanctuary from the body of the church is in many parts covered with plates of solid silver and gold, richly and finely wrought. On the walls are painted the images of more than two thousand three hundred saints, some at full length and some of a colossal size, and the whole interior seems illuminated with gold, of which more than two hundred and ten thousand leaves have been employed in embellishing it. From the centre of the roof is suspended a crown of massive silver, with forty-eight chandeliers, all in a single piece, and weighing nearly three thousand pounds. Besides the portraits of saints and martyrs, there are portraits of the old historians, whose names, to prevent confusion, are attached to their resemblances, as Aristotle, Anarcharsis, Thucydides, Plutarch, &c. Some of the paintings on wood could not fail to delight an antiquary, inasmuch as every vestige of paint being obliterated, there is abundance of room for speculation as to their age and character. There is also an image of the Virgin, painted by St. Luke's own hand!!! the face dark, almost black, the head encircled with a glory of precious stones, and the hands and the body gilded. It is revered for its miraculous powers, guarded with great care, and enclosed within a large silver covering, which is never removed but on great religious festivals, or on payment of a ruble to the verger. Here, too, is a nail from the cross,

a robe of our Saviour's, and part of one of the Virgin's!!! And here, too, are the tombs of the church patriarchs, one of whom, St. Phillippe, honoured by a silver monument, dared to say to John the Terrible, "We respect you as an image of the Divinity, but as a man you partake of the dust of the earth."

The Cathedral of the Assumption is honoured as the place where the sovereigns of Russia are crowned, and there is but a step from their throne to their grave, for near it is the Cathedral of the archangel Michael, the ancient burial-place where, in raised sepulchres, lie the bodies of the Czars, from the time when Moscow became the seat of empire until the close of the seventeenth century. The bodies rest in raised tombs or sepulchres, each covered with a velvet pall, and having on it a silver plate, bearing the name of the occupant and the date of his decease. Close by is an odd-looking church, constantly thronged with devotees; a humble structure, said to be the oldest Christian church in Moscow. It was built in the desert, before Moscow was thought of, and its walls are strong enough to last till the gorgeous city shall become a desert again.

After strolling through the churches I ascended the tower of Ivan Veliki, or John the Great, the first of the Czars. It is about two hundred and seventy feet high, and contains thirty-three bells, the smallest weighing seven thousand, and the largest more than one hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds English. On festivals they are all tolled together, the Muscovites being extremely fond of Ivan Veliki's music. This celebrated tower rises above every other object in the Kremlin, and its large gilded dome and cross are conspicuous from every part of the city. From its top I had the finest view

of Moscow and the surrounding country, and, perhaps, the finest panoramic view in the world. Hundreds of churches were in sight, with their almost innumerable domes, and spires, and crosses glittering with gold, Tartaric battlements, terraces, balconies, and ramparts, Gothic steeples, Grecian columns, the star, the crescent, and the cross, palaces, mosques, and Tartar temples, pagodas, pavilions, and verandas, monasteries peeping out over high walls and among noble trees, the stream of the Moskwa winding prettily below, and in the distance the Sparrow Hills, on which the French army first made its appearance on the invasion of Moscow. It may seem strange, but I did not feel myself a stranger on the top of that tower. Thousands of miles away I had read its history. I knew that the magnificent city at my feet had been a sheet of fire, and that, when Napoleon fled by the light of its conflagration, a dreadful explosion shook to their foundation the sacred precincts of the Kremlin, and rent from its base to its top the lofty tower of Ivan.

I descended, and the custode conducted me to another well-known object, the great bell, the largest, and the wonder of the world. It is only a short distance from the foot of the tower, in an excavation under ground, accessible by a trapdoor, like the covered mouth of a well. I descended by a broken ladder, and can hardly explain to myself the curiosity and interest with which I examined this monstrous piece of metal. I have no knowledge of or taste for mechanics, and no particular penchant for bells, even when spelled with an additional *e*; but I knew all about this one, and it added wonderfully to the interest with which I strolled through the Kremlin, that, from accidental circumstances, I was familiar with every object within its

walls. I impeach, no doubt, my classical taste, but, before seeing either, I had dwelt with more interest upon the Kremlin, and knew more of it, than of the Acropolis at Athens; and I stood at the foot of the great bell almost with a feeling of reverence. Its perpendicular



The Great Bell.

height is twenty-one feet four inches, and the extreme thickness of the metal twenty-three inches; the length of the clapper is fourteen feet, the greatest circumference sixty-seven feet four inches, its weight upward of four hundred thousand pounds English, and its cost has been estimated at more than three hundred and sixty-five thousand pounds sterling. There is some question whether this immense bell was ever hung, but it is supposed that it was suspended by a great number of beams and crossbeams; that it was rung by forty or fifty men, one half on either side, who pulled the clapper by means of ropes, and that the sound amazed and deafened the inhabitants. On one side is a crack large enough to admit the figure of a man. I went inside

and called aloud, and received an echo like the reverberations of thunder.

Besides the great bell, there is another noisy musical instrument, namely, the great gun, like the bell, the largest in the world, being a four thousand three hundred and twenty pounder. It is sixteen feet long, and the diameter of its calibre nearly three feet. I jumped in and turned round in its mouth, and sat upright, my head not reaching the top. All around were planted cannon taken from the French in their unhappy expedition against the capital of Russia; immense fieldpieces, whose throats once poured their iron hail against the walls within which they now repose as trophies. I was attracted by a crowd at the door of one of the principal buildings, which I found to be the treasury, containing what a Russian prizes as his birthright, the repository of sacred heirlooms; the doorkeeper demanded a permit, and I answered him with rubles and entered the treasury. On the first floor are the ancient imperial carriages; large, heavy, and extraordinary vehicles, covered with carving and gilding, and having large plate glass windows; among them was an enormous sleigh, carved and profusely gilded, and containing a long table with cushioned seats on each side; all together, these vehicles were most primitive and Asiatic in appearance, and each one had some long and interesting story connected with it.

I ascended by a noble staircase to the *belle etage*, a gallery composed of five parts, in the first of which are the portraits of all the emperors and Czars and their wives, in the exact costume of the times in which they lived; in another is a model of a palace projected by the Empress Catharine to unite the whole Kremlin

under one roof, having a circumference of two miles, and make of it one magnificent palace ; if it had been completed according to the plan, this palace would probably have surpassed the Temple of Solomon or any of the seven wonders of the world. In another is a collection of precious relics, such as the crowns worn by the different emperors and Czars, loaded with precious stones ; the dresses worn at their marriages ; the canopies under which the emperors are married, surmounted by magnificent plumes ; two canopies of red velvet, studded with gold, and a throne with two seats. The crown of Prince Vladimir is surmounted by a golden cross, and ornamented with pearls and precious stones, and, until the time of Peter the Great, was used to crown the Czars ; the crown of the conquered kingdom of Cazan was placed there by the victorious hands of John Vassilivitch. Besides these were the crowns of the conquered countries of Astrachan and Siberia. That of John Alexius has eight hundred and eighty-one diamonds, and under the cross which surmounts it is an immense ruby. There were also the crown of Peter the Great, containing eight hundred and forty-seven diamonds ; that of Catharine the First, his widow, containing two thousand five hundred and thirty-six fine diamonds, to which the Empress Anne added a ruby of enormous size, bought by the Russian ambassador at Pekin ; and, lastly, the crown of unhappy Poland ! It is of polished gold, surmounted by a cross, but no other ornament. And there were other emblems of royalty : a throne or Greek fauteuil of ivory, in arabesque, presented to John the Great by the ambassadors who accompanied from Rome to Moscow the Princess Sophia, whom he had demanded in marriage. She was

the daughter of Thomas Paleologus Porphyrogenitus, brother of Constantine Paleologus, who died in fourteen hundred and fifty-three, after seeing his empire fall into the hands of the Turks. By this marriage John considered himself the heir of Constantine, and took the title of Czar, meaning Cæsar (this is one of the derivations of the name), and thus the emperor and autocrat of all the Russias has the fairest claim to the throne of the Cæsars, and, consequently, has always had an eye upon Constantinople; then there are the throne of Boris, adorned with two thousand seven hundred and sixty turquoises and other precious stones; that of Michel, containing eight thousand eight hundred and twenty-four precious stones; that of Alexius, containing eight hundred and seventy-six diamonds, one thousand two hundred and twenty-four other jewels, and many pearls, bought of a company of merchants trafficking to Ispahan; the throne of the Czars John and Peter, made of massive silver, separated in the middle, the back a cloth of gold, concealing a hole through which the Czarina used to dictate answers to the foreign ambassadors; and, lastly, the throne of Poland!

In the armory are specimens of ancient armour, the workmanship of every age and nation; coats of mail, sabres adorned with jewels, swords, batons, crosses in armour, imperial robes, ermines in abundance, and, finally, the clothes in which Peter the Great worked at Saardam, including his old boots, from which it appears that he had considerable of a foot. These memorials were all interesting, and I wandered through the apartments till ordered out by the footman, when I returned to my hotel to meet my old friend the marquis, who was engaged to dine with me. At his suggestion

we went to a new restaurant, patronized by a different set of people from those who frequented the Restaurant au coin du pont des Mareschaux, being chiefly Frenchmen, manufacturers, and small merchants of various kinds, who, while they detested the country, found it a profitable business to introduce Parisian luxuries and refinements among the barbarous Russians. A party of about twenty sat at a long table, and relieved the severity of exile by talking of their beautiful and beloved France; many of them were old militaires; and my octogenarian friend, as a soldier distinguished under the empire, and identified with the glory of the French arms, was treated with a consideration and respect honourable to them and flattering to himself. At another table was another circle of strangers, composed almost exclusively of Swiss, forming here, as elsewhere, one of the most valuable parts of the foreign population; keeping alive by intercourse with each other the recollections of home, and looking to the time when, with the profits of successful industry, they might return to their wild and beloved native mountains.

"Dear is that hill to which his soul conforms,
And dear that cliff which lifts him to the storms."

Before we rose from table my friend of the theatre came in and took his seat at one end; he talked and laughed louder than any one else, and was received generally with an outward appearance of cordiality; but the old marquis could not endure his presence. He said he had become too old to learn, and it was too late in life to temporize with dishonour; that he did not blame his countrymen; fair words cost nothing, and it was not worth their while wilfully to make an enemy who would always be on their haunches; but as to himself, he had

but a few years to live, and he would not sully the last moments of his life by tolerating a man whom he regarded as a disgrace to his country. We rose from the table, the old marquis leaning on my arm, and pouring in my ears his honest indignation at the disgraceful character of his countryman, and proceeded to the Kitaigorod, or Chinese Town, the division immediately encircling the Kremlin. It is enclosed by a wall with battlements, towers, and gates; is handsomely and compactly built, with wide, clean, and regular streets, and thronged with every variety of people, Greeks, Turks, Tartars, Cossacks, Chinese, Muscovites, French, Italians, Poles, and Germans, in the costumes of their respective nations. The quarter is entirely Russian, and I did not find in the shops a single person who could speak any language but Russian. In one of them, where I was conducted by the marquis, I found the old mongik to whom I before referred, who could not agree with his master for the price of his ransom. The principal shops resemble the bazars in the East, though they are far superior even to those in Constantinople, being built of stone, and generally in the form of arcades. They are well filled with every description of Asiatic goods; and some of them, particularly their tea, and tobacco, and pipe shops, are models of propriety and cleanliness. The façade of the great bazar or market is very imposing, resting the whole length on Corinthian columns. It fronts on a noble square, bounded on the opposite side by the white walls of the Kremlin, and contains six thousand "bargaining shops." The merchants live at a distance, and, on leaving their shops at sundown, each of them winds a piece of cord round

the padlock of his door, and seals it with soft wax ; a seal being with the Russians more sacred than a lock.

In another section of the Kitaigorod is the finest part of the city, containing the hotels and residences of the nobles, many of which are truly magnificent. The hotel at which I put up would in Italy be called a palace. As we moved slowly along the street by the Pont des Mareschaux, we discoursed of the terrible inroads at this moment making by the French in the capital of the north, almost every shop having an inviting sign of nouveautés from Paris. Foiled in their attempt with the bayonet, they are now advancing with apparently more feeble but far more insidious and fatal weapons ; and the rugged Russian, whom French arms could not conquer, bows to the supremacy of the French modistes and artistes, and quietly wears the livery of the great mistress of fashion.

CHAPTER IV.

The Drosky.—Salle des Nobles.—Russian Gaming.—Gastronomy.—Pedroeki.—A Sunday in Moscow.—A Gipsy Belle.—Tea drinking.—The Emperor's Garden.—Retrospective.

EARLY the next morning I mounted a drosky and rode to a celebrated garden or springs, furnished with every description of mineral water. I have several times spoken of the drosky. This may be called the Russian national vehicle, for it is found all over Russia, and nowhere else that I know of, except at Warsaw, where it was introduced by its Russian conquerors. It is on

four wheels, with a long cushioned seat running lengthwise, on which the rider sits astride as on horseback, and so low that he can mount from the street. It is drawn by two horses; one in shafts, with a high arched bow over the neck called the douga, and the other, called "le furieux," in traces alongside, this last being trained to curb his neck and canter while the shaft-horse trots. The seat is long enough for two besides the driver, the riders sitting with their feet on different sides; or sometimes there is a cross-seat behind, on which the riders sit, with their faces to the horses, and the drosky boy, always dressed in a long surtout, with a bell-crowned hat turned up at the sides, sits on the end. But to return to the springs. The waters are prepared under the direction of medical men, who have the chymical analysis of all the principal mineral waters known, and manufacture them to order. As is universally the case in Russia, where there is any attempt at style, the establishment is upon a magnificent scale. The building contains a room perhaps one hundred and fifty feet long, with a clean and highly-polished floor, large looking-glasses, elegant sofas, and mahogany chairs and tables. The windows open upon a balcony extending along the whole front, which is furnished with tables and rustic chairs, and opens upon a large garden ornamented with gravel-walks, trees, and the most rare and valuable plants and flowers, at the time of my visit in full bloom. Every morning, from sunrise till noon, crowds of people, and particularly the nobility and higher classes, frequent this establishment, and that morning there was a larger collection than usual. Russian hospitality is conspicuous at a place like this. A stranger, instead of being avoided, is sought out; and after one or two promenades

I was accosted by more than one gentleman, ready to show me every civility. In the long room and on the balconies, scattered about at the different tables, I saw the gourmand who had distended his stomach almost to bursting, and near him the gaunt and bilious dyspeptic, drinking their favourite waters; the dashing officer and the blooming girl, the lover and coquette, and, in short, all the style and fashion of Moscow, their eyes occasionally turning to the long mirrors, and then singly, in pairs and in groups, strolling gently through the gardens, enjoying the music that was poured forth from hidden arbours.

Returning through a street not far from my hotel, I saw a line of carriages, and gentlemen and ladies passing under a light arcade, which formed the entrance to a large building. I joined the throng, and was put back by the doorkeeper because I was not in a dresscoat. I ran to my hotel and changed my frockcoat, but now I had no *biglietto* of entrance. A few rubles obviated this difficulty and admitted me to the *Salle des Nobles*, a magnificent apartment surrounded by a colonnade, capable of containing more than three thousand persons, and said to be the finest ballroom in Europe. It belongs to a club of the nobility, and none are admitted as members but nobles. All games of hazard are forbidden; but, nevertheless, all games of hazard are played. Indeed, among the "on dits" which a traveller picks up, gambling is said to be the great vice of Russia. Young men who have not two rubles to rub together will bet thousands; and, when all other resources fail, the dishonourable will cheat, but the delicate-minded will kill themselves. It is not uncommon for a young man to say at the cardtable over night, "I must shoot myself

to-morrow ;" and he is as good as his word. The Salle was open for a few days, as a sort of fair, for the exhibition of specimens of Russian manufacture ; and, besides tables, workboxes, &c., there were some of the finest living specimens of genuine Russian men and women that I had yet seen, though not to be compared, as a Russian officer said, to whom I made the remark, with the exhibition of the same specimens in the waltz and mazourka, when the Salle was lighted up and decorated for a ball.

I returned to my hotel, where I found my old friend the marquis waiting, according to appointment, to dine with me. He would have accompanied me everywhere, but I saw that he suffered from the exertion, and would not allow it. Meeting with me had struck a chord that had not been touched for years, and he was never tired of talking of his friends in America. Every morning he breakfasted in my room, and we dined together every day. We went to the restaurant where I had supped with my friend of the theatre. The saloon was crowded, and at a table next us sat a seigneur, who was dining upon a delicacy that will surprise the reader, viz., one of his own female slaves, a very pretty girl, whom he had hired to the keeper of the restaurant for her maintenance and a dinner *a volonté* per annum for himself. This was the second time he had dined on her account, and she was then waiting upon him ; a pretty, modest, delicate-looking girl, and the old noble seemed never to know when he had enough of her. We left him gloating over still untasted dishes, and apparently mourning that human ability could hold out no longer. In going out my old friend, in homely but pithy phrase, said the only difference be-

tween a Russian seigneur and a Russian serf is, that the one wears his shirt inside his trousers and the other outside ; but my friend spoke with the prejudices of a soldier of France aggravated by more than twenty years of exile. So far as my observation extended, the higher classes are rather extraordinary for talent and acquirements. Their government is unfortunate for the development and exercise of abilities. They have none of the learned profession ; merchandize is disgraceful, and the army is the only field. With an ardent love of country and an ambition to distinguish himself, every nobleman becomes a soldier, and there is hardly an old or middle-aged individual of this class who was not in arms to repel the invasion of Napoleon, and hardly a young man who did not serve lately in a less noble cause, the campaign in Poland. The consequence of service in the army seems to have been generally a passion for display and expensive living, which sent them back to their estates, after their terms of service expired, over head and ears in debt. Unable to come often to the cities, and obliged to live at their chateaux, deprived of all society, surrounded only by slaves, and feeling the want of the excitement incident to a military life, many of them become great gourmands, or rather, as my French friend said, gluttons. They do not eat, said he, they swallow ; and the manner in which, with the true spirit of a Frenchman who still remembered the cuisine of the Palais Royal, he commented upon their eating entremets, hors d'œuvres, rotis, and deserts all pellmell, would have formed a proper episode to Major Hamilton's chapter upon Americans eating eggs out of wineglasses. The old marquis, although he retained all his French prejudices against the Rus-

sians, and always asserted, as the Russians themselves admit, that, but for the early setting in of winter, Napoleon would have conquered Russia, allowed them the virtue of unbounded hospitality, and enumerated several principal families at whose tables he could at any time take a seat without any express invitation, and with whom he was always sure of being a welcome guest; and he mentioned the case of a compatriot who for years had a place regularly reserved for him at the table of a seigneur, which he took whenever he pleased without any questions being asked, until, having stayed away longer than usual, the seigneur sent to inquire for him, and learned that he was dead.

But to return. Toward evening I parted with the marquis, mounted a drosky, and rode to the country theatre at Pedroski. Pedroski is a place dear to the heart of every Russian, having been the favourite residence of Peter the Great, to whom Russia owes its existence among civilized nations. It is about three versts from the barrier, on the St. Petersburg road. The St. Petersburg Gate is a very imposing piece of architecture. Six spirited horses rest lightly upon the top, like the brazen horses at St. Mark's in Venice. A wide road, divided into avenues for carriages and pedestrians, gravelled and lined with trees, leads from the gate. The chateau is an old and singular, but interesting building of red brick, with a green dome and white cornices, and enclosed by a circular wall flanked with turrets. In the plain in front two regiments of Cossack cavalry were going through their exercises. The grounds around the chateau are very extensive, handsomely laid out for carriages and promenades, public and retired, to suit every taste. The principal promenade is about a

mile in length, through a forest of majestic old trees. On each side is a handsome footpath of continual shade; and sometimes almost completely hidden by the luxuriant foliage are beautiful little summer-houses, abundantly supplied with all kinds of refreshments.

The theatre is at a little distance from the extreme end of the great promenade, a plain and unpretending building; and this and the grand operahouse are the only theatres I have seen built like ours, merely with continued rows of seats, and not partitioned off into private boxes. The opera was some little Russian piece, and was followed by the grand ballet, the *Revolt of the Seraglio*. He who goes to Russia expecting to see a people just emerging from a state of barbarism, will often be astonished to find himself suddenly in a scene of Parisian elegance and refinement; and in no place will he feel this wonder more than in an operahouse at Moscow. The house was rather full, and contained more of the Russian nobility than I had yet seen at any one time. They were well dressed, adorned with stars and ribands, and, as a class of men, the "biggest in the round" I ever saw. Orders and titles of nobility, by-the-way, are given with a liberality which makes them of no value; and all over Russia princes are as plenty as pickpockets in London.

The seigneurs of Russia have jumped over all intermediate grades of civilization, and plunged at once into the luxuries of metropolitan life. The ballet was, of course, inferior to that of Paris or London, but it is speaking in no mean praise of it to say that at this country theatre it might be made a subject of comparison. The dancers were the prettiest, the most interesting, and, what I was particularly struck with, the most

modest looking I ever saw on the stage. It was melancholy to look at those beautiful girls, who, amid the glare and glitter of the stage, and in the graceful movements of the dance, were perfectly captivating and entrancing, and who, in the shades of domestic life, might fill the measure of man's happiness on earth, and know them to be slaves. The whole troop belongs to the emperor. They are selected when young with reference to their beauty and talents, and are brought up with great care and expense for the stage. With light fairy figures, seeming rather spirits than corporeal substances, and trained to inspire admiration and love, they can never give way to these feelings themselves, for their affections and marriages are regulated entirely by the manager's convenience. What though they are taken from the very poorest class of life, leaving their parents, their brothers and sisters, the tenants of miserable cabins, oppressed and vilified, and cold and hungry, while they are rolling in luxuries. A chain does not gall the less because it is gilded. Raised from the lot to which they were born, taught ideas they would never have known, they but feel more sensibly the weight of their bonds; and the veriest sylph, whose graceful movements have brought down the loudest thunders of applause, and whose little heart flutters with the admiration she has excited, would probably give all her shortlived triumph for the privilege of bestowing that little flutterer where it would be loved and cherished. There was one among them whom I long remembered. I followed her with my eyes till the curtain fell and left a blank around me. I saw her go out, and afterward she passed me in one of a long train of dark blue carriages belonging to the direction, in which they are car-

ried about like merchandise from theatre to theatre, but, like many other bright visions that broke upon me for a moment, I never saw her again.

At about eleven I left the steps of the theatre to return home. It was a most magnificent night, or, rather, it is almost profanation to call it by so black a name, for in that bright northern climate the day seemed to linger, unwilling to give place before the shades of night. I strolled on alone, wrapped in lonely but not melancholy meditations; the carriages rolled rapidly by me, and I was almost the last of the throng that entered the gate of Moscow.

A Sunday at Moscow. To one who had for a long time been a stranger to the sound of the church-going bell, few things could be more interesting than a Sunday at Moscow. Any one who has rambled along the Maritime Alps, and has heard from some lofty eminence the convent bell ringing for matins, vespers, and midnight prayers, will long remember the sweet yet melancholy sounds. To me there is always something touching in the sound of the church-going bell; touching in its own notes, but far more so in its associations. And these feelings were exceedingly fresh when I awoke on Sunday in the holy city of Moscow. In Greece and Turkey there are no bells; in Russia they are almost innumerable, but this was the first time I had happened to pass the Sabbath in a city. I lay and listened, almost fearing to move lest I should hush the sounds; thoughts of home came over me; of the day of rest, of the gathering for church, and the greeting of friends at the church door. But he who has never heard the ringing of bells at Moscow does not know its music. Imagine a city containing more than six hundred church-

es and innumerable convents, all with bells, and these all sounding together, from the sharp, quick hammer-note, to the loudest, deepest peals that ever broke and lingered on the ear, struck at long intervals, and swelling on the air as if unwilling to die away. I rose and threw open my window, dressed myself, and after breakfast, joining the throng called to their respective churches by their well-known bells, I went to what is called the English chapel, where, for the first time in many months, I joined in a regular church service, and listened to an orthodox sermon. I was surprised to see so large a congregation, though I remarked among them many English governesses with children, the English language being at that moment the rage among the Russians, and multitudes of cast-off chambermaids adventuring thither to teach the rising Russian nobility the beauties of the English tongue.

All over the Continent Sunday is the great day for observing national manners and customs. I dined at an early hour with my friend the marquis, and, under his escort, mounting a drosky, rode to a great promenade of the people called *L'Allée des Peuples*. It lies outside the barrier, and beyond the state prisons, where the exiles for Siberia are confined, on the land of Count Schremetow, the richest nobleman in Russia, having one hundred and thirty thousand slaves on his estate; the chateau is about eight versts from the city, and a noble road through his own land leads from the barrier to his door.

This promenade is the great rendezvous of the people; that is, of the merchants and shopkeepers of Moscow. The promenade is simply a large piece of ground ornamented with noble trees, and provided with every

thing necessary for the enjoyment of all the national amusements, among which the Russian mountain is the favourite; and refreshments were distributed in great abundance. Soldiers were stationed at different points to preserve order, and the people seemed all cheerful and happy; but the life and soul of the place were the Bohemian or gipsy girls. Wherever they moved, a crowd gathered round them. They were the first I had seen of this extraordinary people. Coming no one knows whence, and living no one knows how, wanderers from their birth, and with a history enveloped in doubt, it was impossible to mistake the dark complexion and piercing coal black eyes of the gipsy women. The men where nowhere to be seen, nor were there any old women with them; and these young girls, well dressed, though, in general, with nothing peculiar in their costume, moved about in parties of five or six, singing, playing, and dancing to admiring crowds. One of them, with a red silk cloak trimmed with gold, and a gold band round her hair, struck me as the very *beau ideal* of a gipsy queen. Recognising me as a stranger, she stopped just in front of me, struck her castanets and danced, at the same time directing the movements of her companions, who formed a circle around me. There was a beauty in her face, combined with intelligence and spirit, that riveted my attention, and when she spoke her eyes seemed to read me through. I ought, perhaps, to be ashamed of it, but in all my wanderings I never regretted so much my ignorance of the language as when it denied me the pleasure of conversing with that gipsy girl. I would fain have known whether her soul did not soar above the scene and the employment in which I found her; whether

she was not formed for better things than to display her beautiful person before crowds of boors ; but I am sorry to add, that the character of my queen was not above reproach ; and, as I had nothing but my character to stand upon in Moscow, I was obliged to withdraw from the observation which her attention fixed upon me.

Leaving my swarthy princess with this melancholy reflection, and leaving the scene of humbler enjoyment, I mounted a drosky, and, depositing my old friend in the suburbs of the city, in half an hour was in another world, in the great promenade of Pedroski, the gathering-place of the nobility, where all the rank and fashion of Moscow were vying with each other in style and magnificence. The extensive grounds around the old chateau are handsomely disposed and ornamented with trees, but the great carriage promenade is equal to anything I ever saw. It is a straight road, more than a mile in length, through a thick forest of noble trees. For two hours before dark all the equipages in Moscow paraded up and down this promenade. These equipages were striking and showy without being handsome, and the Russian manner of driving four horses makes a very dashing appearance, the leaders being harnessed with long traces, perhaps twenty feet from the wheel horses, and guided by a lad riding the near leader, the coachman sitting as if nailed to the box, and merely holding the reins. All the rules of good taste, as understood in the capitals of Southern Europe, were set at defiance ; and many a seigneur, who thought he was doing the thing in the very best style, had no idea how much his turnout would have shocked an English whip. But all this extravagance, in my eyes, added much to the effect of the scene ; and the star-spangled Muscovite who dashed

up and down the promenade on horseback, with two Calmuc Tartars at his heels, attracted more of my attention than the plain gentleman who paced along with his English jockey and quiet elegance of equipment. The stars and decorations of the seigneurs set them off to great advantage; and scores of officers, with their showy uniforms, added brilliancy to the scene, while the footmen made as good an appearance as their masters.

On either side of the grand promenade is a walk for foot passengers, and behind this, almost hidden from view by the thick shade of trees, are little cottages, arbours, and tents, furnished with ices and all kinds of refreshments suited to the season. I should have mentioned long since that tea, the very pabulum of all domestic virtues, is the Russian's favourite beverage. They say that they have better tea than can be obtained in Europe, which they ascribe to the circumstance of its being brought by caravans over land, and saved the exposure of a sea voyage. Whether this be the cause or not, if I am any judge they are right as to the superiority of their article; and it was one of the most striking features in the animating scene at Pedroski to see family groups distributed about, all over the grounds, under the shade of noble trees, with their large brass urn hissing before them, and taking their tea under the passing gaze of thousands of people with as much unconcern as if by their own firesides.

Leaving for a moment the thronged promenade, I turned into a thick forest and entered the old chateau of the great Peter. There all was solitude; the footman and I had the palace to ourselves. I followed him through the whole range of apartments, in which there was an appearance of staid respectability that quite won

my heart, neither of them being any better furnished than one of our oldfashioned country houses. The pomp and show that I saw glittering through the openings in the trees were unknown in the days of the good old Peter ; the chateau was silent and deserted ; the hand that built it was stiff and cold, and the heart that loved it had ceased to beat ; old Peter was in his grave, and his descendants loved better their splendid palaces on the banks of the Neva.

When Moscow was burning, Napoleon fled to this chateau for refuge. I stopped for a moment in the chamber where, by the blaze of the burning city, he dictated his despatches for the capital of France ; gave the attendant a ruble, and again mixed with the throng, with whom I rambled up and down the principal promenade, and at eleven o'clock was at my hotel. I ought not to forget the Russian ladies ; but, after the gay scene at Pedroski, it is no disparagement to them if I say that, in my quiet walk home, the dark-eyed gipsy girl was uppermost in my thoughts.

The reader may perhaps ask if such is indeed what the traveller finds in Russia ; " Where are the eternal snows that cover the steppes and the immense wastes of that Northern empire ? that chill the sources of enjoyment, and congeal the very fountains of life ? " I answer, they have but just passed by, and they will soon come again ; the present is the season of enjoyment ; the Russians know it to be brief and fleeting, and, like butterflies, unfold themselves to the sun and flutter among the flowers.

Like them, I made the most of it at Moscow. Mounted in a drosky, I hurried from church to church, from convent to convent, and from quarter to quarter. But

although it is the duty of a traveller to see everything that is to be seen, and although there is a kind of excitement in hurrying from place to place, which he is apt to mistake for pleasure, it is not in this that his real enjoyment is found. His true pleasure is in turning quietly to those things which are interesting to the imagination as well as to the eyes, and so I found myself often turning from the churches and palaces, specimens of architecture and art, to the sainted walls of the Kremlin. Here were the first and last of my visits; and whenever I sauntered forth without any specific object, perhaps to the neglect of many other places I ought to have seen, my footsteps involuntarily turned thitherward.

Outside and beneath the walls of the Kremlin, and running almost the whole extent of its circumference, are boulevards and a public garden, called the Emperor's, made within a few years, and the handsomest thing of the kind in Moscow; I am not sure but that I may add anywhere else. I have compared it in my mind to the Gardens of the Luxembourg and Tuileries, and in many respects hold it to be more beautiful. It is more agreeably irregular and undulating in its surface, and has a more rural aspect, and the groves and plants are better arranged, although it has not the statues, lakes, and fountains of the pride of Paris. I loved to stroll through this garden, having on one side of me the magnificent buildings of the great Russian princes, seigneurs, and merchants, among the finest and most conspicuous of which is the former residence of the unhappy Queen of Georgia; and on the other side, visible through the foliage of the trees, the white walls of the Kremlin, and, towering above them, the domes

of the palaces and churches within, and the lofty tower of Ivan Veliki. Thence I loved to stroll to the Holy Gate of the Kremlin. It is a vaulted portal, and over the entrance is a picture, with a lamp constantly burning; and a sentinel is always posted at the gate. I loved to stand by it and see the haughty seigneurs and the degraded serf alike humble themselves on crossing the sacred threshold, and then, with my hat in my hand, follow the footsteps of the venerating Russian. Once I attempted to brave the interdict, and go in with my head covered; but the soldier at the gate stopped me, and forbade my violating the sacred prohibition. Within the walls I wandered about, without any definite object, sometimes entering the great church and beholding for a moment the prostrate Russian praying before the image of some saint, or descending to look once more at the great bell, or at other times mounting the tower and gazing at the beautiful panorama of the city.

On the last day of my stay in Moscow a great crowd drew me to the door of the church, where some fête was in course of celebration, in honour of the birth, marriage, or some other incident in the life of the emperor or empress. The archbishop, a venerable-looking old man, was officiating, and when he came out a double line of men, women, and children was drawn up from the door of the church to his carriage, all pressing forward and struggling to kiss his hands. The crowd dispersed, and I strolled once more through the repository of heirlooms, and imperial reliques and trophies; but, passing by the crowns loaded with jewels, the canopies and thrones adorned with velvet and gold, I paused before the throne of unhappy Poland!

I have seen great cities desolate and in ruins, magnificent temples buried in the sands of the African desert, and places once teeming with fertility now lying waste and silent; but no monument of fallen greatness ever affected me more than this. It was covered with blue velvet and studded with golden stars. It had been the seat of Casimir, and Sobieski, and Stanislaus Augustus. Brave men had gathered round it and sworn to defend it, and died in redeeming their pledge. Their oaths are registered in heaven, their bodies rest in bloody graves; Poland is blotted from the list of nations, and her throne, unspotted with dishonour, brilliant as the stars which glitter on its surface, is exhibited as a Russian trophy, before which the stoutest manhood need not blush to drop a tear.

Toward evening I returned to my favourite place, the porch of the palace of the Czars. I seated myself on the step, took out my tablets, and commenced a letter to my friends at home. What should I write? Above me was the lofty tower of Ivan Veliki; below, a solitary soldier, in his gray overcoat, was retiring to a sentry-box to avoid a drizzling rain. His eyes were fixed upon me, and I closed my book. I am not given to musing, but I could not help it. Here was the theatre of one of the most extraordinary events in the history of the world. After sixty battles and a march of more than two thousand miles, the grand army of Napoleon entered Moscow, and found no smoke issuing from a single chimney, nor a Muscovite even to gaze upon them from the battlements or walls. Moscow was deserted, her magnificent palaces forsaken by their owners, her three hundred thousand inhabitants vanished as if they had never been. Silent and amazed, the grand army filed

through its desolate streets. Approaching the Kremlin, a few miserable, ferocious, and intoxicated wretches, left behind as a savage token of the national hatred, poured a volley of musketry from the battlements. At midnight the flames broke out in the city; Napoleon, driven from his quarters in the suburbs, hurried to the Kremlin, ascended the steps, and entered the door at which I sat. For two days the French soldiers laboured to repress the fierce attempts to burn the city. Russian police-officers were seen stirring up the fire with tarred lances; hideous-looking men and women, covered with rags, were wandering like demons amid the flames, armed with torches, and striving to spread the conflagration. At midnight again the whole city was in a blaze; and while the roof of the Kremlin was on fire, and the panes of the window against which he leaned were burning to the touch, Napoleon watched the course of the flames and exclaimed, "What a tremendous spectacle! These are Scythians indeed." Amid volumes of smoke and fire, his eyes blinded by the intense heat, and his hands burned in shielding his face from its fury, and traversing streets arched with fire, he escaped from the burning city.

Russia is not classic ground. It does not stand before us covered with the shadow of great men's deeds. A few centuries ago it was overrun by wandering tribes of barbarians; but what is there in those lands which stand forth on the pages of history, crowned with the glory of their ancient deeds, that, for extraordinary daring, for terrible sublimity, and undaunted patriotism, exceeds the burning of Moscow. Neither Marathon, nor Thermopylæ, nor the battle of the Horatii, nor the defence of Cocles, nor the devotion of the Decii, can equal it; and when time shall cover with its dim and

quiet glories that bold and extraordinary deed, the burning of Moscow will be regarded as outstripping all that we read of Grecian or Roman patriotism, and the name of the Russian governor (Rostopchin), if it be not too tough a name to hand down to posterity, will never be forgotten.

CHAPTER V.

Getting a Passport.—Parting with the Marquis.—The Language of Signs.—A Loquacious Traveller.—From Moscow to St. Petersburg.—The Wolga.—Novogorod.—Newski Perspective.—An unfortunate Mistake.—Northern Twilight.

UNABLE to remain longer in Moscow, I prepared for my journey for St. Petersburg. Several diligences run regularly between these two great cities; one of which, the *Velocifère*, is superior to any public conveyance on the Continent of Europe. I took my place in that, and two days beforehand sent my passport to be *viséd*. I sent for it the next day, and it was not ready. I went myself, and could not get it. I knew that nothing could be done at the Russian offices without paying for it, and was ready and willing to do so, and time after time I called the attention of the officer to my passport. He replied coolly, "*Dans un instant*," and, turning to something else, kept me waiting two hours; and when at length he took it up and arranged it, he led me down stairs out of sight to receive the expected *douceur*. He was a well-dressed man, with the large government button on his coat, and rather distingué in his appearance and manners. I took the passport, folded it up, and put

it in my pocket with a coolness equal to his own, and with malicious pleasure put into his hand a single ruble, equal to twenty cents of our money ; he expected at least twenty-five rubles, or about five dollars, and his look of rage and disappointment amply repaid me for all the vexation he had caused by his delay. I bade him farewell with a smile that almost drove him mad.

Bribery is said to be almost universal among the inferior officers of government, and there is a story of a Frenchman in Russia which illustrates the system. He had an office, of which the salary was so small that he could not live upon it. At first he would not take bribes, but stern necessity drove him to it, and while he was about it he did the thing handsomely. Having overreached the mark, and been guilty of being detected, he was brought before the proper tribunal ; and when asked, " Why did you take a bribe ? " his answer was original and conclusive, " I take, thou takest, he takes, we take, you take, they take ! "

I told the marquis the story of my parting interview at the police-office, which he said was capital, but startled me by suggesting that, if there should happen to be any irregularity, I would have great trouble in getting it rectified ; even this, however, did not disturb my immediate satisfaction, and, fortunately, all was right.

The morning of my departure, before I was out of bed, the marquis was in my room. Meeting with me had revived in him feelings long since dead ; and at the moment of parting he told me, what his pride had till that moment concealed, that his heart yearned once more to his kindred ; and that, if he had the means, old as he was, he would go to America. And yet, though his frame trembled, and his voice was broken, and his

lamp was almost burned out, his spirit was as high as when he fought the battles of the empire; and he told me to say to them that he would not come to be a dependant upon their bounty; that he could repay all they should do for him by teaching their children. He gave me his last painting, which he regarded with the pride of an artist, as a souvenir for his sister; but having no means of carrying it safely, I was obliged to return it to him. He remained with me till the moment of my departure, clung to my hand after I had taken my place in the drosky, and when we had started I looked back and saw him still standing in the road. It seemed as if the last link that bound him to earth was broken. He gave me a letter, which I forwarded to his friends at home; his sister was still living, and had not forgotten her long-lost brother; she had not heard from him in twenty years, and had long believed him dead. Pecuniary assistance was immediately sent to him, and, unhappily, since my return home, intelligence has been received that it arrived only at the last moment when human aid could avail him; in time to smooth the pillow of death by the assurance that his friends had not forgotten him. And perhaps, in his dying moments, he remembered me. At all events, it is some satisfaction, amid the recollections of an unprofitable life, to think that, when his checkered career was drawing to its close, I had been the means of gladdening for a moment the old exile's heart.

I must not forget my host, the quondam exile to Siberia. In his old days his spirit too was chafed at living under despotism, and, like the marquis, he also hoped, before he died, to visit America. I gave him my address, with the hope, but with very little expecta-

tion, of seeing him again. A travelling companion once remarked, that if every vagabond to whom I gave my address should find his way to America, I would have a precious set to present to my friends. Be it so; there is not a vagabond among them whom I would not be glad to see.

My English companion and myself had seen but little of each other at Moscow. He intended to remain longer than I did, but changed his mind, and took a place in the same diligence for St. Petersburg. This diligence was the best I ever rode in; and, for a journey of nearly five hundred miles, we could not have been more comfortably arranged. It started at the hour punctually, as from the Messagere in Paris. We rolled for the last time through the streets of Moscow, and in a few minutes passed out at the St. Petersburg Gate. Our companions were a man about thirty-five, a cattle-driver, with his trousers torn, and his linen hanging out ostentatiously in different places, and an old man about sixty-five, just so far civilized as to have cut off the long beard and put on broadcloth clothes. It was the first time the old man had ever been on a journey from home; everything was new to him, and he seemed puzzled to know what to make of us; he could not comprehend how we could look, and walk, and eat like Russians, and not talk like them. My place was directly opposite his, and, as soon as we were seated, he began to talk to me. I looked at him and made no answer; he began again, and went on in an uninterrupted strain for several minutes, more and more surprised that I did not answer, or answered only in unintelligible sounds. After a while he seemed to come to the conclusion that I was deaf and dumb, and turned to my companion as to my keep-

er for an explanation. Finding he could do nothing there, he appeared alarmed, and it was some time before he could get a clear idea of the matter. When he did, however, he pulled off an amazingly white glove, took my hand and shook it, pointed to his head, shook it, and touched my head, then put his hand to his heart, then to my heart; all which was to say, that though our heads did not understand each other, our hearts did. But though he saw we did not understand him, he did not on that account stop talking; indeed, he talked incessantly, and the only way of stopping him was to look directly in his face and talk back again; and I read him long lectures, particularly upon the snares and temptations of the world into which he was about to plunge, and wound up with stanzas of poetry and scraps of Greek and Latin, all which the old man listened to without ever interrupting me, bending his ear as if he expected every moment to catch something he understood; and when I had finished, after a moment's blank expression he whipped off his white glove, took my hand, and touched significantly his head and heart. Indeed, a dozen times a day he did this; and particularly whenever we got out, on resuming our seats, as a sort of renewal of the compact of good fellowship, the glove invariably came off, and the significant movement between the hand, head, and heart was repeated. The second day a young seigneur named Chickoff, who spoke French, joined the diligence, and through him we had full explanations with the old Russian. He always called me the American graff or noble, and said that, after being presented to the emperor, I should go down with him into the country.

My worthy comrade appeared at first to be not a little bored by the old man's garrulous humour; but at length, seized by a sudden whim, began, as he said, to teach him English. But such English! He taught him, after a fashion peculiarly his own, the manner of addressing a lady and gentleman in English; and very soon, with the remarkable facility of the Russians in acquiring languages, the old man, utterly unconscious of their meaning, repeated the words with extraordinary distinctness; and regularly, when he took his place in the diligence, he accompanied the significant movements of his hand, head, and heart to me with the not very elegant address taught him by my companion. Though compelled to smile inwardly at the absurdity of the thing, I could not but feel the inherent impropriety of the conduct of my eccentric fellow-traveller; and ventured to suggest to him that, though he had an undoubted right to do as he pleased in matters that could not implicate me, yet, independent of the very questionable character of the joke itself (for the words savoured more of Wapping than of St. James's), as we were known to have travelled together, a portion of the credit of having taught the old Russian English might fall upon me—an honour of which I was not covetous, and, therefore, should tell the old man never to repeat the words he had been taught, which I did without assigning any reason for it, and before we arrived at St. Petersburg he had forgotten them.

The road from Moscow to St. Petersburg is now one of the best in Europe. It is Macadamized nearly the whole way, and a great part is bordered with trees; the posthouses are generally large and handsome, under the direction of government, where soup, cutlets,

&c., are always ready at a moment's notice, at prices regulated by a tariff hanging up in the room, which, however, being written in Russian, was of no particular use to us. The country is comparatively thickly settled, and villages are numerous. Even on this road, however, the villages are forlorn things, being generally the property and occupied by the serfs of the seigneurs, and consisting of a single long street, with houses on both sides built of logs, the better sort squared, with the gable-end to the street, the roofs projecting two or three feet from the houses, and sometimes ornamented with rude carving and small holes for windows. We passed several chateaux, large, imposing buildings, with parks and gardens, and a large church, painted white, with a green dome surmounted by a cross.

In many places on the road are chapels with figures of the Panagia, or all holy Virgin, or some of the saints; and our old Russian, constantly on the lookout for them, never passed one without taking off his hat and going through the whole formula of crosses; sometimes, in entering a town, they came upon us in such quick succession, first on one side, then on the other, that, if he had not been engaged in, to him, a sacred ceremony, his hurry and perplexity would have been ludicrous. During the night we saw fires ahead, and a little off the road were the bivouacs of teamsters or wayfarers, who could not pay for lodging in a miserable Russian hut. All the way we met the great caravan teams carrying tallow, hides, hemp, and other merchandise to the cities, and bringing back wrought fabrics, groceries, &c., into the interior. They were generally thirty or forty together, one man or woman attending to three or four carts, or, rather, neglecting

them, as the driver was generally asleep on the top of his load. The horses, however, seemed to know what they were about; for as the diligence came rolling toward them, before the postillion could reach them with his whip, they intuitively hurried out of the way. The bridges over the streams and rivers are strong, substantial structures, built of heavy hewn granite, with iron balustrades, and ornamented in the centre with the double-headed eagle, the arms of Russia.

At Tver we passed the Wolga on a bridge of boats. This noble river, the longest in Europe, navigable almost from its source for an extent of four thousand versts, dividing, for a great part of its course, Europe and Asia, runs majestically through the city, and rolls on, bathing the walls of the city of Astrachan, till it reaches the distant Caspian; its banks still inhabited by the same tribes of warlike Cossacks who hovered on the skirts of the French army during their invasion of Russia. By its junction with the Tverza, a communication is made between the Wolga and Neva, or, in other words, between the Caspian and Baltic. The impetus of internal improvements has extended even to the north of Europe, and the Emperor Nicolas is now actively engaged in directing surveys of the great rivers of Russia for the purpose of connecting them by canals and railroads, and opening steam communications throughout the whole interior of his empire. A great number of boats of all sizes, for carrying grain to the capital, were lying off the city. These boats are generally provided with one mast, which, in the largest, may equal a frigate's mainmast. "The weight of the matsail," an English officer remarks, "must be prodigious, having no fewer than one hundred breadths in it; yet the facility with which it is managed

bears comparison with that of the Yankees with their boom mainsail in their fore-and-aft clippers." The rudder is a ponderous machine, being a broad piece of timber floating astern twelve or fifteen feet, and fastened to the tiller by a pole, which descends perpendicularly into the water; the tiller is from thirty to forty feet long, and the pilot who turns it stands upon a scaffold at that distance from the stern. Down the stream a group of Cossacks were bathing, and I could not resist the temptation to throw myself for a moment into this king of rivers. The diligence hurried me, and, as it came along, I gathered up my clothes and dressed myself inside.

About eighty versts from St. Petersburg we came to the ancient city of Novogorod. In the words of an old traveller, "Next unto Moscow, the city of Novogorod is reputed the chiefest in Russia; for although it be in majestie inferior to it, yet in greatness it goeth beyond it. It is the chiefest and greatest mart-town of all Muscovy; and albeit the emperor's seat is not there, but at Moscow, yet the commodiousness of the river, falling into that gulf which is called Sinus Finnicus, whereby it is well frequented by merchants, makes it more famous than Moscow itself." Few of the ruined cities of the Old World present so striking an appearance of fallen greatness as this comparatively unknown place. There is an ancient saying, "Who can resist the gods and Novogorod the Great?" Three centuries ago it covered an area of sixty-three versts in circumference, and contained a population of more than four hundred thousand inhabitants. Some parts of it are still in good condition, but the larger portion has fallen to decay. Its streets present marks of desolation, mouldering walls, and ruined churches, and its population

has dwindled to little more than seven thousand inhabitants. The steeples in this ancient city bear the cross, unaccompanied by the crescent, the proud token showing that the Tartars, in all their invasions, never conquered it, while in the reconquered cities the steeples all exhibit the crescent surmounted by the cross.

Late in the afternoon of the fourth day we were approaching St. Petersburg. The ground is low and flat, and I was disappointed in the first view of the capital of Russia; but passing the barrier, and riding up the Newski Perspective, the most magnificent street in that magnificent city, I felt that the stories of its splendour were not exaggerated, and that this was, indeed, entitled to the proud appellation of the "Palmyra of the North." My English companion again stopped at a house kept by an Englishwoman and frequented by his countrymen, and I took an apartment at a hotel in a broad street with an unpronounceable Russian name, a little off the Newski Perspective. I was worn and fatigued with my journey, but I could not resist the inclination to take a gentle promenade along the Newski Perspective. While in the coffee-room refreshing myself with a cup of the best Russian tea, I heard some one outside the door giving directions to a tailor, and presently a man entered, whom, without looking at him, I told he was just the person I wanted to see, as I had a pair of pantaloons to be mended. He made no answer, and, without being able to see distinctly, I told him to wait till I could go up stairs and change them, and that he must mend them strongly and bring them back in the morning. In all probability, the next moment I should have been sprawling on the floor; but the landlady, a clever Frenchwoman, who saw my error,

stepped up, and crying out, "Ah, Monsieur Colonel, attendez, attendez," explained my mistake as clearly as I could have done myself, and I followed closely with an apology, adding that my remark could not be intended as disrespectful to him, inasmuch as even then, with the windows closed, I could scarcely distinguish his person. He understood the thing at once, accepted my apology with great frankness, and, instead of knocking me down, or challenging me to fight with sabre or some other diabolical thing, finding I was a stranger just arrived from Moscow, sat down at the table, and before we rose offered to accompany me in my walk.

There could be no mistake as to the caste of my new friend. The landlady had called him colonel, and, in repelling the imputation of his being a tailor, had spoken of him as a rich seigneur, who for ten years had occupied the front apartments *au premier* in her hotel. We walked out into the Newski Perspective, and strolled along that magnificent street down to the Admiralty, and along the noble quays of the Neva. I had reached the terminus of my journey; for many months I had been moving farther and farther away, and the next step I took would carry me toward home. It was the eve of the fourth of July; and as I strolled through the broad streets and looked up at the long ranges of magnificent buildings, I poured into the ear of my companion the recollections connected with this moment at home: in boyhood, crackers and fireworks in readiness for the great jubilee of the morrow; and, latterly, the excursion into the country to avoid the bustle and confusion of "the glorious fourth."

At Moscow and during the journey I had admired the exceeding beauty of the twilight in these northern

latitudes, but this night in St. Petersburg it was magnificent. I cannot describe the peculiar shades of this northern twilight. It is as if the glare and brilliancy of the sun were softened by the mellowing influence of the moon, and the city, with its superb ranges of palaces, its statues, its bridges, and its clear and rapid river, seemed, under the reflection of that northern light, of a brilliant and almost unearthly beauty. I felt like rambling all night. Even though worn with three days' travel, it was with me as with a young lady at her first ball; the night was too short. I could not bear to throw it away in sleep. My companion was tough, and by no means sentimental, and the scene was familiar to him; but he told me that, even in his eyes, it never lost its interest. Moonlight is something, but this glorious twilight is a thing to enjoy and to remember; and, as the colonel remarked when we sat down in his apartment to a comfortable supper, it always gave him such an appetite. After supper I walked through a long corridor to my apartment, threw myself upon my bed and tried to sleep, but the mellow twilight poured through my window and reproached me with the base attempt. I was not restless, but I could not sleep; lest, however, the reader should find himself of a different humour, I will consider myself asleep the first night in St. Petersburg.

CHAPTER VI.

Police Requisites.—The Russian Capital.—Equestrian Statue of Peter the Great.—The Alexandrine Column.—Architectural Wonders.—The Summer Islands.—A perilous Achievement.—Origin of St. Petersburg.—Tombs of dead Monarchs.—Origin of the Russian Navy.

JULY FOURTH. I had intended to pass this day at Moscow, and to commemorate it in Napoleon style by issuing a bulletin from the Kremlin, but it was a long time since I had heard from home. At Constantinople I had written to Paris, directing my letters to be sent to Petersburg, and, notwithstanding my late hours the night before, I was at the postoffice before the door was open. I had never been so long without hearing from home, and my lips quivered when I asked for letters, my hand shook when I received them, and I hardly drew breath until I had finished the last postscript.

My next business was at the bureau of general police for a *carte de séjour*, without which no stranger can remain in St. Petersburg. As usual, I was questioned as to my reasons for coming into Russia; age, time of sojourn, destination, &c.; and, satisfied that I had no intention of preaching democratic doctrines or subverting the government of the autocrat, I received permission to remain two weeks, which, according to direction, I gave to my landlord to be entered at the police-office of his district. As no stranger can stay in Petersburg without permission, neither can he leave without it; and, to obtain this, he must advertise three times in the Government Gazette, stating his name, address, and intention of leaving the empire; and as the

VOL. II.—I

Gazette is only published twice a week, this formality occupies eight days. One of the objects of this is to apprise his creditors, and give them an opportunity of securing their debts ; and few things show the barbarity and imperfect civilization of the Russians more clearly than this ; making it utterly impossible for a gentleman to spend a winter in St. Petersburg and go away without paying his landlord. This must prevent many a soaring spirit from wending its way hither, and keep the residents from being enlivened by the flight of those birds of passage which dazzle the eyes of the denizens of other cities. As there was no other way of getting out of the dominions of the Czar, I caused my name and intention to be advertised. It did not create much of a sensation ; and though it was proclaimed in three different languages, no one except my landlord seemed to feel any interest in it. After all, to get in debt is the true way to make friends ; a man's creditors always feel an interest in him ; hope no misfortune may happen to him, and always wish him prosperity and success.

These formalities over, I turned to other things. Different from every other principal city I had visited, St. Petersburg had no storied associations to interest the traveller. There is no Colosseum, as at Rome ; no Acropolis, as at Athens ; no Rialto, as at Venice ; and no Kremlin, as at Moscow ; nothing identified with the men and scenes hallowed in our eyes, and nothing that can touch the heart. It depends entirely upon itself for the interest it creates in the mind of the traveller.

St. Petersburg is situated at the mouth of the Neva, at the eastern extremity of the Gulf of Finland. It is built partly on islands formed by the Neva, and partly

on both sides of that river. But little more than a century ago, the ground now covered with stately palaces consisted of wild morasses and primeval forests, and a few huts tenanted by savage natives, who lived upon the fish of the sea. In seventeen hundred and three Peter the Great appeared as a captain of grenadiers, under the orders of one of his own generals, on the wild and dreary banks of the Neva, drove the Swedes from their fortress at its mouth, cut down the forests on the rude islands of the river, and laid the foundations of a city which now surpasses in architectural magnificence every other in the world. I do not believe that Rome, when Adrian reared the mighty Colosseum, and the Palace of the Cæsars covered the Capitoline Hill, exhibited such a range of noble structures as now exists in the Admiralty Quarter. The Admiralty itself is the central point, on one side fronting the Neva, and on the other a large open square, and has a façade of marble, with ranges of columns, a quarter of a mile in length. A beautiful golden spire shoots up from the centre, towering above every other object, and seen from every part of the city glittering in the sun; and three principal streets, each two miles in length, radiate from this point. In front is a range of boulevards, ornamented with trees, and an open square, at one extremity of which stands the great church of St. Isaac, of marble, jasper, and porphyry, upon a foundation of granite; it has been once destroyed, and reared again with increased splendour, enormous columns of a single block of red granite already lifting their capitals in the air.

On the right of the façade, and near the Isaac Bridge, itself a magnificent structure, a thousand and fifty feet

long and sixty feet wide, with two drawbridges, stands the well-known equestrian statue of Peter the Great. The huge block of granite forming the pedestal is fifteen hundred tons in weight. The height of the figure of the emperor is eleven feet, that of the horse seventeen feet, and the weight of the metal in the group nearly thirty-seven thousand pounds. Both the idea and the execution of this superb monument are regarded as masterpieces of genius. To immortalize the enterprise and personal courage with which that extraordinary man conquered all difficulties and converted a few fishermen's huts into palaces, Peter is represented on a fiery steed, rushing up a steep and precipitous rock to the very brink of a precipice; the horse rears with his fore feet in the air, and seems to be impatient of restraint, while the imperial rider, in an attitude of triumph, extends the hand of protection over his capital rising out of the waters. To aid the inspiration of the artist, a Russian officer, the boldest rider of his time, daily rode the wildest Arabian of Count Orloff's stud to the summit of a steep mound, where he halted him suddenly, with his forelegs raised pawing the air over the brink of the precipice. The monument is surrounded by an iron railing, and the pedestal bears the simple inscription, *Petro Primo, Catharina Secunda, MDCCLXXXII.*

On the other side of the square, and in front of the Winter Palace, raised within the last two years, and the most gigantic work of modern days, rivalling those magnificent monuments in the Old World whose ruins now startle the wondering traveller, and towering to the heavens, as if to proclaim that the days of architectural greatness are not gone by for ever, is the great Alexandrine Column, a single shaft of red granite, exclusive

of pedestal and capital, eighty-four feet high. On the summit stands an angel holding a cross with the left hand, and pointing to heaven with the right. The pedestal contains the simple inscription, "To Alexander I. Grateful Russia."



Column of Alexander I.

Surrounding this is a crescent of lofty buildings, denominated the Etat Major, its central portion having before it a majestic colonnade of the Corinthian order, placed on a high rustic basement, with a balustrade of solid bronze gilt between the columns. In

the middle is a triumphal arch, which, with its frieze, reaches nearly to the upper part of the lofty building, having a span of seventy feet, the entablature sculptured with military trophies, allegorical figures, and groups in alto relievo. Next on a line with the Admiralty, and fronting the quay, stands the first of a long range of imperial palaces, extending in the form of a crescent for more than a mile along the Neva. The Winter Palace is a gigantic and princely structure, built of marble, with a façade of seven hundred and forty feet. Next are the two palaces of the Hermitage, connected with it and with each other by covered galleries on bold arches; the beautiful and tasteful fronts of these palaces are strangely in contrast with their simple and unpretending name. Next is the stately Grecian theatre of the Hermitage. Beyond this are the barracks of the guards, then the palace of the French ambassador, then the marble palace built by Catharine II. for her favourite, Prince Orloff, with a basement of granite and superstructure of bluish marble, ornamented with marble columns and pillars. In this palace died Stanislaus Poniatowsky, the last of the Polish sovereigns. This magnificent range, presenting an uninterrupted front of marble palaces upward of a mile in length, unequalled in any city in the world, is terminated by an open square, in which stands a colossal statue of Suwarow; beyond this, still on the Neva, is the beautiful summer garden fronting the palace of Paul II.; and near it, and at the upper end of the square, is the palace of the Grand-duke Michael.

Opposite is the citadel, with its low bastions of solid granite, washed all around by the Neva; beautiful in its structure, and beautifully decorated by the tall, slender, and richly-gilded spire of its church. On the

one side of the Admiralty is the senatorial palace, and beyond opens the English Quay, with a range of buildings that might well be called the residence of "merchant princes;" while the opposite bank is crowded with public buildings, among which the most conspicuous are the palace of the Academy of the Fine Arts; the Obelisk, rising in the centre of a wide square, recording the glory of some long-named Russian hero; the building of the Naval Cadet Corps, with its handsome front, and the barracks of the Guard of Finland; finally, the great pile of palace-like buildings belonging to the Military Cadet Corps, reaching nearly to the palace of the Academy of Sciences, and terminating with the magnificent Grecian front of the Exchange. I know that a verbal description can give but a faint idea of the character of this scene, nor would it help the understanding of it to say that it exhibits all that wealth and architectural skill can do, for few in our country know what even these powerful engines can effect; as for myself, hardly noting the details, it was my greatest delight to walk daily to the bridge across the Neva, at the summer gardens, the view from which more than realized all the crude and imperfect notions of architectural magnificence that had ever floated through my mind; a result that I had never found in any other city I had yet seen, not excepting Venice the Rich or Genoa the Proud, although the latter is designated in guide-books the city of palaces.

Next to the palaces in solidity and beauty of structure are the bridges crossing the Neva, and the magnificent quays along its course, these last being embankments of solid granite, lining the stream on either side the whole length of its winding course through the city.

I was always at a loss whether to ride or walk in St. Petersburg ; sometimes I mounted a drosky and rode up and down the Newski Perspective, merely for the sake of rolling over the wooden pavement. This street is perhaps more than twice as wide as Broadway ; the gutter is in the middle, and on each side are wooden pavements wide enough for vehicles to pass each other freely. The experiment of wooden pavements was first made in this street, and found to answer so well that it has since been introduced into many others ; and as the frost is more severe than with us, and it has stood the test of a Russian winter, if rightly constructed it will, no doubt, prove equally successful in our own city. The road is first covered with broken stone, or Macadamized ; then logs are laid across it, the interstices being filled up with sand and stone, and upon this are placed hexagonal blocks of pine about eighteen inches long, fitted like joiner's work, fastened with long pegs, and covered with a preparation of melted lead.

When I left Paris I had no expectation of travelling in Russia, and, consequently, had no letter of introduction to Mr. Wilkins, our minister ; but, long before reaching St. Petersburg, I had made it a rule, immediately on my arrival in a strange place, to call upon our representative, whatever he might be, from a minister plenipotentiary down to a little Greek consul. I did so here, and was probably as well received upon my own introduction as if I had been recommended by letter ; for I got from Mr. Wilkins the invitation to dinner usually consequent upon a letter, and besides much interesting information from home, and, more than all, a budget of New-York newspapers. It was a long time since I had seen a New-York paper, and I hailed all the well-known

names, informed myself of every house to let, every vessel to sail, all the cotton in market, and a new kind of shaving-soap for sale at Hart's Bazar; read with particular interest the sales of real estate by James Bleecker and Sons; wondered at the rapid increase of the city in creating a demand for building lots in one hundred and twenty-seventh street, and reflected that some of my old friends had probably grown so rich that they would not recognise me on my return.

Having made arrangements for the afternoon to visit the Summer Islands, I dined with my friend the colonel, in company with Prince —— (I have his name in my pocketbook, written by himself, and could give a fac simile of it, but I could not spell it). The prince was about forty-five, a high-toned gentleman, a nobleman in his feelings, and courtly in his manners, though, for a prince, rather out at elbows in fortune. The colonel and he had been fellow-soldiers, had served in the guards during the whole of the French invasion, and entered Paris with the allied armies as officers in the same regiment. Like most of the Russian seigneurs, they had run through their fortunes in their military career. The colonel, however, had been set up again by an inheritance from a deceased relative, but the prince remained ruined. He was now living upon a fragment saved from the wreck of his estate, a pension for his military services, and the bitter experience acquired by a course of youthful extravagance. Like many of the reduced Russian seigneurs, he was disaffected toward the government, and liberal in politics; he was a warm admirer of liberal institutions, had speculated upon and studied them both in France and America, and analyzed understandingly the spirit of liberty as devel-

oped by the American and French revolutions; when he talked of Washington, he folded his hands and looked up to heaven, as if utterly unable to express the fulness of his emotions. With us, the story of our revolution is a hackneyed theme, and even the sacred name of Washington has become almost commonplace; but the freshness of feeling with which the prince spoke of him invested him in my eyes with a new and holy character. After dinner, and while on our way to the Summer Islands, we stopped at his apartments, when he showed me the picture of Washington conspicuous on the wall; under it, by way of contrast, was that of Napoleon; and he summed up the characters of both in few words, by saying that the one was all for himself, the other all for his country.

The Summer Islands on Sundays and fête-days are the great promenade of the residents of the capital, and the approach to them is either by land or water. We preferred the latter, and at the Admiralty took a boat on the Neva. All along the quay are flights of steps cut in the granite, and descending to a granite platform, where boats are constantly in attendance for passengers. These boats are fantastically painted, and have the stern raised some three or four feet; sometimes they are covered with an awning. The oar is of disproportionate thickness toward the handle, the blade very broad, always feathered in rowing, and the boatman, in his calico or linen shirt and pantaloons, his long yellowish beard and mustaches, looks like anything but the gondolier of Venice. In passing down the Neva I noticed, about half way between low-water mark and the top of the quay, a ring which serves to fasten vessels, and is the mark, to which if the water rises, an inundation may be ex-

pected. The police are always on the watch, and the fearful moment is announced by the firing of cannon, by the display of white flags from the Admiralty steeple by day, and by lanterns and the tolling of the bells at night. In the last dreadful inundation of eighteen hundred and twenty-four, bridges were swept away, boats floated in some parts of the town above the tops of the houses, and many villages were entirely destroyed. At Cronstadt, a vessel of one hundred tons was left in the middle of one of the principal streets; eight thousand dead bodies were found and buried, and probably many thousands more were hurried on to the waters of the Gulf of Finland.

It was a fête-day in honour of some church festival, and a great portion of the population of St. Petersburg was bending its way toward the Summer Islands. The emperor and empress were expected to honour the promenade with their presence, and all along the quay boats were shooting out loaded with gay parties, and, as they approached the islands, they formed into a fleet, almost covering the surface of the river. We were obliged to wait till perhaps a dozen boats had discharged their passengers before we could land.

These islands are formed by the branches of the Neva, at about three versts from St. Petersburg. They are beautifully laid out in grass and gravel-walks, ornamented with trees, lakes, shrubs, and flowers, connected together by light and elegant bridges, and adorned with beautiful little summer-houses. These summer-houses are perfectly captivating; light and airy in their construction, and completely buried among the trees. As we walked along we heard music or gentle voices, and now and then came upon a charming cottage, with

a beautiful lawn or garden, just enough exposed to let the passer-by imagine what he pleased; and on the lawn was a light fanciful tent, or an arbour hung with foliage, under which the occupants, with perhaps a party of friends from the city, were taking tea, and groups of rosy children were romping around them, while thousands were passing by and looking on, with as perfect an appearance of domestic *abandon* as if in the privacy of the fireside. I have sometimes reproached myself that my humour changed with every passing scene; but, inasmuch as it generally tended toward at least a momentary satisfaction, I did not seek to check it; and though, from habit and education, I would have shrunk from such a family exhibition, here it was perfectly delightful. It seemed like going back to a simpler and purer age. The gay and smiling faces seemed to indicate happy hearts; and when I saw a mother playing on the green with a little cherub daughter, I felt how I hung upon the community, a loose and disjointed member, and would fain have added myself to some cheerful family group. A little farther on, however, I saw a papa flogging a chubby urchin, who drowned with his bellowing the music from a neighbouring arbour, which somewhat broke the charm of this public exhibition of scenes of domestic life.

Besides these little retiring-places or summer residences of citizens, restaurants and houses of refreshments were distributed in great abundance, and numerous groups were sitting under the shade of trees or arbours, taking ices or refreshments; and the grounds for promenade were so large and beautifully disposed, that, although thousands were walking through them, there was no crowd, except before the door of a prin-

cipal refectory, where a rope-dancer was flourishing in the air among the tops of the trees.

In addition to the many enchanting retreats and summer residences created by the taste, luxury, and wealth of private individuals, there are summer theatres and imperial villas. But the gem of the islands is the little imperial palace at Cammenoi. I have walked through royal palaces, and admired their state and magnificence without one wish to possess them, but I felt a strong yearning toward this imperial villa. It is not so grand and stately as to freeze and chill one, but a thing of extraordinary simplicity and elegance, in a beautifully picturesque situation, heightened by a charming disposition of lawn and trees, so elegant, and, if I may add such an unpoetical word in the description of this imperial residence, so comfortable, that I told the prince if I were a Rasselas escaped from the happy valley, I would look no farther for a resting-place. The prince replied that in the good old days of Russian barbarism, when a queen swayed the sceptre, Russia had been a great field for enterprising and adventurous young men, and in more than one instance a palace had been the reward of a favourite. We gave a sigh to the memory of those good old days, and at eleven o'clock returned to the city on the top of an omnibus. The whole road from the Summer Islands and the great street leading to the Admiralty were lighted with little glass lamps, arranged on the sidewalks about six feet apart, but they almost realized the conceit of illuminating the sun by hanging candles around it, seeming ashamed of their own sickly glare and struggling vainly with the glorious twilight.

The next morning the valet who had taken me as his
Vol. II.—K

master, and who told others in the house that he could not attend to them, as he was in my service, informed me that a traveller arrived from Warsaw the night before had taken apartments in the same hotel, and could give me all necessary information in regard to that route ; and, after breakfast, I sent him, with my compliments, to ask the traveller if he would admit me, and shortly after called myself. He was a young man, under thirty, above the middle size, strong and robust of frame, with good features, light complexion, but very much freckled, a head of extraordinary red hair, and a mustache of the same brilliant colour ; and he was dressed in a coloured stuff morning-gown, and smoking a pipe with an air of no small dignity and importance. I explained the purpose of my visit, and he gave me as precise information-as could possibly be had ; and the most gratifying part of the interview was, that before we separated he told me that he intended returning to Warsaw in about ten days, and would be happy to have me bear him company. I gladly embraced his offer, and left him, better pleased with the result of my interview than I had expected from his rather unprepossessing appearance. He was a Frenchman by descent, born in Belgium, and educated and resident in Poland, and possessed in a striking degree the compounded amor patriæ incident to the relationship in which he stood to these three countries. But, as I shall be obliged to speak of him frequently hereafter, I will leave him for the present to his morning-gown and pipe.

Well pleased with having my plans arranged, I went out without any specific object, and found myself on the banks of the Neva. Directly opposite the Winter Palace, and one of the most conspicuous objects on the

whole line of the Neva, is the citadel or old fortress, and, in reality, the foundation of the city. I looked long and intently on the golden spire of its church, shooting toward the sky and glittering in the sun. This spire, which rises tapering till it seems almost to fade away into nothing, is surmounted by a large globe, on which stands an angel supporting a cross. This angel, being made of corruptible stuff, once manifested symptoms of decay, and fears were entertained that he would soon be numbered with the fallen. Government became perplexed how to repair it, for to raise a scaffolding to such a height would cost more than the angel was worth. Among the crowd which daily assembled to gaze at it from below was a roofer of houses, who, after a long and silent examination, went to the government and offered to repair it without any scaffolding or assistance of any kind. His offer was accepted; and on the day appointed for the attempt, provided with nothing but a coil of cords, he ascended inside to the highest window, and, looking for a moment at the crowd below and at the spire tapering away above him, stood up on the outer ledge of the window. The spire was covered with sheets of gilded copper, which, to beholders from below, presented only a smooth surface of burnished gold; but the sheets were roughly laid, and fastened by large nails, which projected from the sides of the spire. He cut two pieces of cord, and tied loops at each end of both, fastened the upper loops over two projecting nails, and stood with his feet in the lower; then, clinching the fingers of one hand over the rough edges of the sheets of copper, raised himself till he could hitch one of the loops on a higher nail with the other hand; he did the same for the other loop, and so

he raised one leg after the other, and at length ascended, nail by nail; and stirrup by stirrup, till he clasped his arms around the spire directly under the ball. Here it seemed impossible to go any farther, for the ball was ten or twelve feet in circumference, with a smooth and glittering surface, and no projecting nails, and the angel was above the ball, as completely out of sight as if it were in the habitation of its prototypes. But the daring roofer was not disheartened. Raising himself in his stirrups, he encircled the spire with a cord, which he tied round his waist; and, so supported, leaned gradually back until the soles of his feet were braced against the spire, and his body fixed almost horizontally in the air. In this position he threw a cord over the top of the ball, and threw it so coolly and skilfully that at the first attempt it fell down on the other side, just as he wanted it; then he drew himself up to his original position, and, by means of his cord, climbed over the smooth sides of the globe, and in a few moments, amid thunders of applause from the crowd below, which at that great height sounded only like a faint murmur, he stood by the side of the angel. After attaching a cord to it he descended, and the next day carried up with him a ladder of ropes, and effected the necessary repairs.

But to return. With my eyes fixed upon the spire, I crossed the bridge and entered the gate of the fortress. It is built on a small island, fortified by five bastions, which, on the land side, are mere ramparts connected with St. Petersburg quarter by drawbridges, and on the river side it is surrounded by walls cased with granite, in the centre of which is a large gate or sallyport. As a fortress, it is now useless; but it is a striking object of embellishment to the river, and an interesting

monument in the history of the city. Peter himself selected this spot for his citadel and the foundation of his city. At that time it contained two fishing-huts in ruins, the only original habitations on the island. It was necessary to cut down the trees, and elevate the surface of the island with dirt and stone brought from other places before he commenced building the fortress; and the labour of the work was immense, no less than forty thousand workmen being employed at one time. Soldiers, Swedish prisoners, Ingrians, Carélians, and Cossacks, Tartars and Calmucs, were brought from their distant solitudes to lay the foundation of the imperial city, labouring entirely destitute of all the comforts of life, sleeping on the damp ground and in the open air, often without being able, in that wilderness, to procure their daily meal; and, moreover, without pickaxes, spades, or other instruments of labour, and using only their bare hands for digging; but, in spite of all this, the work advanced with amazing rapidity, and in four months the fortress was completed. The principal objects of interest it now contains are the Imperial Mint and the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. Brought up in a community where "making money" is the great business of life, I ought, perhaps, to have entered the former, but I turned away from the ingots of gold and silver, and entered the old church, the burial-place of Peter the Great, and nearly all the Czars and Czarinas, emperors and empresses, since his time. Around the walls were arranged flags and banners, trophies taken in war, principally from the Turks, waving mournfully over the tombs of the dead. A sombre light broke through the lofty windows, and I moved directly to the tomb of Peter. It is near the

great altar, of plain marble, in the shape of a square coffin, without any ornament but a gold plate, on one end of which are engraved his name and title ; and at the moment of my entrance an old Russian was dusting it with a brush. It was with a mingled feeling of veneration and awe that I stood by the tomb of Peter. I had always felt a profound admiration for this extraordinary man, one of those prodigies of nature which appear on the earth only once in many centuries ; a combination of greatness and cruelty, the sternness of whose temper spared neither age nor sex, nor the dearest ties of kindred ; whose single mind changed the face of an immense empire and the character of millions, and yet who often remarked with bitter compunction, " I can reform my people, but I cannot reform myself."

By his side lies the body of his wife, Catharine I., the beautiful Livonian, the daughter of a peasant girl, and the wife of a common soldier, who, by a wonderful train of events, was raised to wield the sceptre of a gigantic empire. Her fascination soothed the savage Peter in his moodiest hours. She was the mediatrix between the stern monarch and his subjects ; mercy was ever on her lips, and one who knew her well writes what might be inscribed in letters of gold upon her tomb : " She was a pretty, well-looking woman, but not of that sublimity of wit, or, rather, that quickness of imagination which some people have supposed. The great reason why the Czar was so fond of her was her exceeding good temper ; she never was seen peevish or out of humour ; obliging and civil to all, and never forgetful of her former condition, and withal mighty grateful."

Near their imperial parents lie the bodies of their

two daughters, Anne of Holstein and the Empress Elizabeth. Peter, on his deathbed, in an interval of delirium, called to him his daughter Anne, as it was supposed, with the intention of settling upon her the crown, but suddenly relapsed into insensibility; and Anne, brought up in the expectation of two crowns, died in exile, leaving one son, the unfortunate Peter III.

Elizabeth died on the throne, a motley character of goodness, indolence, and voluptuousness, and extremely admired for her great personal attractions. She was never married, but, as she frequently owned to her confidants, never happy but when in love. She was so tender of heart that she made a vow to inflict no capital punishment during her reign; shed tears upon the news of every victory gained by her troops, from the reflection that it could not have been gained without bloodshed, and would never give her consent for the execution of a felon, however deserving; and yet she condemned two noble ladies, one of them the most beautiful woman in Russia, to receive fifty strokes of the knout in the open square of St. Petersburg.

I strolled for a few moments among the other imperial sepulchres, and returned to the tombs of Peter's family. Separate monuments are erected over their bodies, all in the shape of large oblong tombstones, ornamented with gold, and enclosed by high iron railings. As I leaned against the railing of Peter's tomb, I missed one member of his imperial family. It was an awful chasm. Where was his firstborn child and only son? the presumptive heir of his throne and empire? Early the object of his unnatural prejudice, excluded from the throne, imprisoned, tortured, tried, condemned, sentenced to death by the stern decree of his offended father!

The ill-starred Alexius lies in the vaults of the church, in the imperial sepulchre, but without any tomb or inscription to perpetuate the recollection of his unhappy existence. And there is something awful in the juxtaposition of the dead; he lies by the side of his unhappy consort, the amiable Princess Charlotte, who died the victim of his brutal neglect; so subdued by affliction that, in a most affecting farewell to Peter, unwilling to disturb the tranquillity of her last hour, she never mentioned his name, and welcomed death as a release from her sufferings.

Leaving the church, I went to a detached building within the fortress, where is preserved, in a separate building, a four-oared boat, as a memorial of the origin of the Russian navy. Its history is interesting. About the year 1691 Peter saw this boat at a village near Moscow; and inquiring the cause of its being built differently from those he was in the habit of seeing, learned that it was contrived to go against the wind. Under the direction of Brandt, the Dutch shipwright who built it, he acquired the art of managing it. He afterward had a large pleasure-yacht constructed after the same model, and from this beginning went on till he surprised all Europe by a large fleet on the Baltic and the Black Sea. Twenty years afterward he had it brought up from Moscow, and gave a grand public entertainment, which he called the consecration of the "little grandsire." The fleet, consisting of twenty-seven men-of-war, was arranged at Cronstadt in the shape of a half moon. Peter embarked in the little grandsire, himself steering, and three admirals and Prince Mendzikoff rowing, and made a circuit in the gulf, passing by the fleet, the ships striking their flags and saluting it with their

guns, while the little grandsire returned each salute by a discharge of three small pieces. It was then towed up to St. Petersburg, where its arrival was celebrated by a masquerade upon the waters, and, Peter again steering, the boat proceeded to the fortress, and under a discharge of all the artillery it was deposited where it now lies.

Returning, I took a bath in the Neva. In bathing, as in everything else, the Russians profit by the short breath of summer, and large public bathing-houses are stationed at intervals along the quay of the river, besides several smaller ones, tasteful and ornamental in appearance, being the private property of rich seigneurs. I went into one of the former, where a swimming-master was teaching a school of boys the art of swimming. The water of the Neva was the first thing I had found regularly Russian, that is, excessively cold; and though I bathed in it several times afterward, I always found it the same.

At five o'clock I went to dine with Mr. Wilkins. He had broken up his establishment and taken apartments at the house of an English lady, where he lived much in the same style as at home. He had been at St. Petersburg but a short time, and, I believe, was not particularly well pleased with it, and was then making arrangements to return. I had never met with Mr. Wilkins in our own country, and I consider myself under obligations to him; for, not bringing him any letter, I stood an entire stranger in St. Petersburg, with nothing but my passport to show that I was an American citizen, and he might have even avoided the dinner, or have given me the dinner and troubled himself no more about me. But the politeness which he had shown me as a stranger

increased to kindness ; and I was in the habit of calling upon him at all times, and certainly without any expectation of ever putting him in print. We had at table a *parti quarré*, consisting of Mr. Wilkins, Mr. Gibson, who has been our consul, I believe, for twenty years, if, he being still a bachelor, it be not unfriendly to carry him back so far, and Mr. Clay, the secretary of legation, who had been twice left as *chargé d'affaires* at the imperial court, and was then lately married to an English lady in St. Petersburg. After dinner, three or four American merchants came in ; and at eleven o'clock, having made an appointment to go with Mr. Wilkins and see a boatrace on the Neva, Mr. Clay and I walked home along the quay, under that enchanting twilight which I have already so often thrust upon the reader, and which I only regret that I cannot make him realize and enjoy.

CHAPTER VII.

A New Friend.—The Winter Palace.—Importance of a Hat.—An artificial Mine.—Remains of a huge Monster.—Peter the Great's Workshop.—The Greek Religion.—Tomb of a Hero.—A Saint Militant.—Another Love Affair.—The Hermitage.—The Winter and Summer Gardens.

EARLY in the morning, while at breakfast, I heard a loud knock at my door, which was opened without waiting for an answer, and in stalked a tall, stout, dashing-looking young man, with a blue frock, white pantaloons, and a vest of many colours, a heavy gold chain around his neck, an enormous Indian cane in his hand, and a broad-brimmed hat brought down on one side, over his right

eye in particular. He had a terrible scowl on his face, which seemed to be put on to sustain the dignity of his amazing costume, and he bowed on his entrance with as much *hauteur* as if he meant to turn me out of my own room. I stared at him in unfeigned astonishment, when, putting his cane under his arm, and pulling off his hat, his intensely red head broke upon me with a blaze of beauty, and I recognised my friend and intended fellow-traveller, the French Belgian Pole, whom I had seen in an old morning-gown and slippers. I saw through my man at once; and speedily knocking in the head his overwhelming formality, came upon him with the old college salutation, asking him to pull off his clothes and stay a week; and he complied almost literally, for in less than ten minutes he had off his coat and waistcoat, cravat and boots, and was kicking up his heels on my bed. I soon discovered that he was a capital fellow, a great beau in his little town on the frontiers of Poland, and one of a class by no means uncommon, that of the very ugly men who imagine themselves very handsome. While he was kicking his heels over the footboard, he asked me what we thought of red hair in America; and I told him that I could not undertake to speak the public voice, but that, for myself, I did not admire it as much as some people did, though, as to his, there was something striking about it, which was strictly true, for it was such an enormous mop that, as his head lay on the pillow, it looked like a bust set in a large red frame. All the time he held in his hand a pocket looking-glass and a small brush, with which he kept brushing his mustaches, giving them a peculiar twirl toward the ears. I told him that he was wrong about the mustache; and, taking the brush, brought them out of their

twist, and gave them an inclination à la Turque, recommending my own as a model ; but he soon got them back to their place, and, rising, shook his gory locks and began to dress himself, or, as he said, to put himself in parchment for a walk.

My new friend was for no small game, and proposed visiting some of the palaces. On the way he confided to me a conquest he had already made since his arrival ; a beautiful young lady, of course, the daughter of an Italian music-master, who resided directly opposite our hotel. He said he had applied for an apartment next to mine, which commanded a view of the window at which she sat, and asked me, as a friend, whether it would be interfering with me. Having received my assurance that I had no intentions in that quarter, he said he would order his effects to be removed the same day.

By this time we had arrived at the Winter Palace, presenting, as I have before remarked, a marble front on the Neva of more than seven hundred feet, or as long as the side of Washington Square, and larger and more imposing than that of the Tuileries or any other royal palace in Europe. We approached the large door of entrance to this stately pile, and, notwithstanding my modest application, backed by my companion's dashing exterior, we were turned away by the imperial footman because we had not on dresscoats. We went home and soon returned equipped as the law of etiquette requires, and were admitted to the imperial residence. We ascended the principal story by the great marble staircase, remarkable for its magnificence and the grandeur of its architecture. There are nearly a hundred principal rooms on the first floor, occupying an

area of four hundred thousand square feet, and forming almost a labyrinth of splendour. The great banquet-hall is one hundred and eighty-nine feet by one hundred and ten, incrustated with the finest marble, with a row of columns at each end, and the side decorated with attached columns, rich gilding, and splendid mirrors. The great Hall of St. George is one of the richest and most superb rooms on the Continent, not excepting the pride of the Tuileries or Versailles. It is a parallelogram of one hundred and forty feet by sixty, decorated with forty fluted Corinthian columns of porphyritic marble, with capitals and bases of bronze richly gilded, and supporting a gallery with a gilded bronze balustrade of exquisite workmanship. At one end, on a platform, is the throne, approached by a flight of eight steps, covered with the richest Genoa velvet, embroidered with gold, with the double-headed eagle expanding his wings above it. The large windows on both sides are hung with the richest drapery, and the room is embellished by magnificent mirrors and colossal candelabra profusely gilded.

We passed on to the *salle blanche*, which is nearly of the same dimensions, and beautifully chaste in design and finish. Its elevation is greater, and the sides are decorated with pilasters, columns, and bas-reliefs of a soft white tint, without the least admixture of gaudy colours. The space between the Hall of St. George and the *salle blanche* is occupied as a gallery of national portraits, where the Russians who distinguished themselves during the French invasion are exhibited in half-length portraits as rewards for their military services. The three field-marshal, Kutuzow, Bar

clay de Tolly, and the Duke of Wellington, are represented at full length. The symbol which accompanies the hero of Waterloo is that of imperishable strength, the British oak, "the triumpher of many storms."

I will not carry the reader through all the magnificent apartments, but I cannot help mentioning the Diamond Room, containing the crowns and jewels of the imperial family. Diamonds, rubies, and emeralds are arranged round the room in small cases, of such dazzling beauty that it is almost bewildering to look at them. I had already acquired almost a passion for gazing at precious stones. At Constantinople I had wandered through the bazars, under the guidance of a Jew, and seen all the diamonds collected and for sale in the capital of the East, but I was astonished at the brilliancy of this little chamber, and, in my strongly-awakened admiration, looked upon the miser who, before the degrading days of bonds and mortgages, converted his wealth into jewels and precious stones, as a man of elegant and refined taste. The crown of the emperor is adorned with a chaplet of oak-leaves made of diamonds of an extraordinary size, and the imperial sceptre contains one supposed to be the largest in the world, being the celebrated stone purchased by the Empress Catherine II. from a Greek slave for four hundred and fifty thousand rubles and a large pension for life. Eighty thousand persons were employed in the construction of this palace; upward of two thousand habitually reside in it, and even a larger number when the emperor is in St. Petersburg. The imperial flag was then floating from the top of the palace, as an indication to his subjects of his majesty's presence in the capital; and about the time that his majesty sat down to his royal dinner,

we were working upon a cotelette de mouton, and drinking in vin ordinaire health and long life to Nicolas the First; and afterward, in talking of the splendour of the imperial palace and the courtesy of the imperial footmen, we added health and long life to the Lady Autocrat and all the little autocrats.*

After dinner we took our coffee at the Café Chinois, on the Newski Perspective, equal, if not superior, in style and decoration to anything in Paris. Even the rules of etiquette in France are not orthodox all over the world. In Paris it is not necessary to take off the hat on entering a café or restaurant, and in the south of France a Frenchman will sit down to dinner next a lady with his head covered; but in Russia, even on entering an apartment where there are only gentlemen, it is necessary to uncover the head. I neglected this rule from ignorance and want of attention, and was treated with rudeness by the proprietor, and afterward learned the cause, with the suggestion that it was fortunate that I had not been insulted. This is a small matter, but a man's character in a strange place is often affected by a trifling circumstance; and Americans, at least I know it to be the case with myself, are, perhaps, too much in the habit of neglecting the minor rules of etiquette.

That night my new friend had his effects removed to a room adjoining mine, and the next morning I found him sitting in his window with a book in his hand, watching the young lady opposite. He was so pleased with his occupation that I could not get him away, and went off without him. Mr. Wilkins having offered to

* The Winter Palace has since been destroyed by fire. The author has not seen any account of the particulars, but has heard that the contents of the Diamond Chamber were saved.

accompany me to some of the public institutions, I called for him ; and, finding him disengaged, we took a boat on the Neva, and went first to the Academy of Arts, standing conspicuously on the right bank opposite the English Quay, and, perhaps, the chastest and most classical structure in St. Petersburg. In the court are two noble Egyptian Sphynxes. A magnificent staircase, with a double flight of granite steps, leads to a grand landing-place with broad galleries around it, supporting, by means of Ionic columns, the cupola, which crowns the whole. The Rotunda is a fine apartment of exquisite proportions, decorated with statues and busts ; and at the upper end of the Conference-room stands a large table, at the head of which is a full-length portrait of Nicolas under a rich canopy. In one room are a collection of models from the antique, and another of the paintings of native artists, some of which are considered as indicating extraordinary talent.

From hence we went to the *Hotel des Mines*, where the name of the American minister procured us admission without the usual permit. The *Hotel des Mines* was instituted by the great Peter for the purpose of training a mining engineer corps, to explore scientifically the vast mineral resources of the empire, and also engineers for the army. Like all the other public edifices, the building is grand and imposing, and the arrangement of the different rooms and galleries is admirable. In one room is a large collection of medals, and in another of coins. Besides specimens of general mineralogy of extraordinary beauty, there are native iron from the Lake Ononetz, silver ore from Tobolsk, and gold sand from the Oural Mountains ; and in iron bound cases, beautifully ornamented, there is a rich col

lection of native gold, found either in the mines belonging to government or in those of individuals, one piece of which was discovered at the depth of three and a half feet in the sand, weighing more than twenty-four pounds. The largest piece of platinum in existence, from the mines of Demidoff, weighing ten pounds, is here also; and, above all, a colossal specimen of amalachite weighing three thousand four hundred and fifty-six pounds, and, at the common average price of this combination of copper and carbonic acid, worth three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling.

But the most curious part of this valuable repository is under ground, being a model of a mine in Siberia. Furnished with lighted tapers, we followed our guides through winding passages cut into the bowels of the earth, the sides of which represented, by the aggregation of real specimens, the various stratifications, with all the different ores, and minerals, and different species of earth, as they were found in the natural state; the coal formation, veins of copper, and in one place of gold, being particularly well represented, forming an admirable practical school for the study of geology, though under a chillness of atmosphere which would be likely very soon to put an end to studies of all kinds.

From here we passed to the imperial Academy of Sciences, by far the most interesting part of our day's visiting. This, too, was founded by the Great Peter. I hardly know why, but I had already acquired a warm admiration for the stout old Czar. There was nothing high or chivalric about him, but every step in Russia, from the Black Sea to the Baltic, showed me what he had done to advance the condition of his people. I knew all this as matter of history, but here I felt it as

fact. We strolled through the mineralogical and zoological repositories, and stopped before the skeleton of that stupendous inhabitant of a former world, denominated the mammoth, whose fame had been carried over the waste of waters even to our distant country, and beside which even the skeletons of elephants looked insignificant. What was he? where did he live, and is his race extinct? It gave rise to a long train of interesting speculation, to endow him with life, and see him striding with gigantic steps, the living tenant of a former world; and more interesting still to question, as others had done, whether he was not, after all, one of a race of animals not yet extinct, and perhaps wandering even now within a short distance of the Polar Sea.

There is also in this part of the museum a collection of anatomical specimens and of human monsters; an unpleasing exhibition, though, no doubt, useful to medical science; among them was a child with two heads from America. More interesting to me was a large collection of insects, of medals, and particularly of the different objects in gold found in the tumuli of Siberia, consisting of bracelets, vases, crowns, bucklers, rings, sabres with golden hilts, Tartar idols, &c., many of them of great value and of very elegant workmanship, which have given rise to much interesting speculation in regard to the character of the people who formerly inhabited that country. The Asiatic museum contains a library of Chinese, Japanese, Mongolese, and Tibetan books and manuscripts; Mohammedan, Chinese, and Japanese coins; an interesting assemblage of Mongolese idols cut in bronze and gilded, and illustrating the religion of Buddha. There is also an Egyptian museum, containing about a thousand articles. The cabinet of curi-

osities contains figures of all the different people conquered under the government of Russia, habited in their national costumes ; also of Chinese, Persians, Aleutans, Carelians, and the inhabitants of many of the Eastern, Pacific, or Northern Islands discovered or visited by Russian travellers and navigators, as well as of the different nations inhabiting Sibéria.

But by far the most interesting part of the museum is the cabinet of Peter himself, consisting of a suite of apartments, in which the old Czar was in the habit of passing his leisure hours engaged in some mechanical employment. In one room are several brass cylinders turned by his own hands, and covered with battle-scenes of his own engraving. Also an iron bar forged by him ; bas-reliefs executed in copper, representing his desperate battles in Livonia ; an ivory chandelier of curious and highly-wrought workmanship, and a group in ivory representing Abraham offering up his son Isaac, the ram and the angel Gabriel cut out entire. In another room is his workshop, containing a variety of vessels and models etched in copper, and a copperplate with an unfinished battle-scene. His tools and implements are strewn about the room precisely in the state in which he left them the last time he was there. In another chamber were the distended skin of his French body-servant, seven feet high ; the Arabian horse which he rode at the bloody battle of Pultowa, and the two favourite dogs which always accompanied him ; and in another the figure of the old Czar himself in wax, as large as life ; the features, beyond doubt, bearing the exact resemblance to the original, being taken from a cast applied to his face when dead, and shaded in imitation of his real complexion. The eyebrows and hair are black, the

eyes dark, the complexion swarthy, and aspect stern. This figure is surrounded by the portraits of his predecessors, in their barbarian costumes, himself seated in an armchair in the same splendid dress which he wore when with his own hands he placed the imperial crown on the head of his beloved Catharine. Here, also, are his uniform of the guards, gorget, scarf, and sword, and hat shot through at the battle of Pultowa; and the last thing which the guide put into my hands was a long stick measuring his exact height, and showing him literally a great man, being six Russian feet. I must not forget a pair of shoes made by his own hands; but the old Czar was no shoemaker. Nevertheless, these memorials were all deeply interesting; and though I had seen the fruits of his labours from the Black Sea to the Baltic, I never felt such a strong personal attraction to him as I did here.

I was obliged to decline dining with Mr. Wilkins in consequence of an engagement with my friend the Pole; and, returning, I found him at the window with a book in his hand, precisely in the same position in which I had left him. After dinner a servant came in and delivered a message, and he proposed a walk on the Admiralty Boulevards. It was the fashionable hour for promenade, and, after a turn or two, he discovered his fair enslaver, accompanied by her father and several ladies and gentlemen, one of whom seemed particularly devoted to her. She was a pretty little girl, and seemed to me a mere child, certainly not more than fifteen. His admiration had commenced on the Boulevards the first afternoon of his arrival, and had increased violently during the whole day, while he was sitting at the window. He paraded me up and down the walk once or twice,

and, when they had seated themselves on a bench, took a seat opposite. He was sure she was pleased with his admiration, but I could not see that her look indicated any very flattering acknowledgment. In fact, I could but remark that the eyes of the gentlemen were turned toward us quite as often as those of the lady, and suggested that, if he persisted, he would involve us in some difficulty with them; but he said there could not be any difficulty about it, for, if he offended them, he would give them satisfaction. As this view of the case did not hit my humour, I told him that, as I had come out with him, I would remain, but if he made any farther demonstrations, I should leave him, and, at all events, after that he must excuse me from joining his evening promenades. Soon after they left the Boulevards, and we returned to our hotel, where he entertained me with a history of his love adventures at home, and felicitations upon his good fortune in finding himself already engaged in one here.

Sunday. Until the early part of the tenth century the religion of Russia was a gross idolatry. In nine hundred and thirty-five, Olga, the widow of Igor the son of Runic, sailed down the Dneiper from Kief, was baptized at Constantinople, and introduced Christianity into Russia, though her family and nation adhered for a long time to the idolatry of their fathers. The great schism between the Eastern and Western churches had already taken place, and the Christianity derived from Constantinople was of course of the Greek persuasion. The Greek Church believes in the doctrines of the Trinity, but differs from the Catholic in some refined and subtle distinction in regard to what is called the procession of the Holy Ghost. It enjoins the invo-

cation of saints as mediators, and permits the use of pictures as a means of inspiring and strengthening devotion. The well-informed understand the use for which they are intended, but these form a very small portion of the community, and probably the great bulk of the people worship the pictures themselves. The clergy are, in general, very poor and very ignorant. The priests are not received at the tables of the upper classes, but they exercise an almost controlling influence over the lower, and they exhibited this influence in rousing the serfs against the French, which may be ascribed partly, perhaps, to feelings of patriotism, and partly to the certainty that Napoleon would strip their churches of their treasures, tear down their monasteries, and turn themselves out of doors. But of the population of fifty-five millions, fifteen are divided into Roman Catholics, Armenians, Protestants, Jews, and Mohammedans, and among the Caucasians, Georgians, Circassians, and Mongol tribes nearly two millions are pagans or idolaters, Brahmins, Lamists, and worshippers of the sun.

For a people so devout as the Russians, the utmost toleration prevails throughout the whole empire, and particularly in St. Petersburg. Churches of every denomination stand but a short distance apart on the Newski Perspective. The Russian cathedral is nearly opposite the great Catholic chapel; near them is the Armenian, then the Lutheran, two churches for Dissenters, and a mosque for the Mohammedans! and on Sunday thousands are seen bending their steps to their separate churches, to worship according to the faith handed down to them by their fathers.

Early in the morning, taking with me a valet and joining the crowd that was already hurrying with de-

vout and serious air along the Newski Perspective, I entered the Cathedral of our Lady of Cazan, a splendid monument of architecture, and more remarkable as the work of a native artist, with a semicircular colonnade in front, consisting of one hundred and thirty-two Corinthian columns thirty-five feet high, somewhat after the style of the great circular colonnade of St. Peter's at Rome, and surmounted by a dome crowned with a cross of exquisite workmanship, supported on a large gilded ball. Within, fifty noble columns, each of one piece of solid granite from Finland, forty-eight feet high and four feet in diameter, surmounted by a rich capital of bronze, and resting on a massive bronze base, support an arched roof richly ornamented with flowers in bas-relief. The jewels and decorations of the altar are rich and splendid, the doors leading to the sanctum sanctorum, with the railing in front, being of silver. As in the Catholic churches, there are no pews, chairs, or benches, and all over the floor were the praying figures of the Russians. Around the walls were arranged military trophies, flags, banners, and the keys of fortresses wrested from the enemies of Russia; but far more interesting than her columns, and colossal statues, and military trophies, is the tomb of the warrior Kutuzow; simple, and remarkable for the appropriate warlike trophy over it, formed of French flags and the eagles of Napoleon. Admiration for heroism owns no geographical or territorial limits, and I pity the man who could stand by the grave of Kutuzow without feeling it a sacred spot. The Emperor Alexander with his own hands took the most precious jewel from his crown and sent it to the warrior, with a letter announcing to him his elevation to the rank of Prince of Smolensko; but

richer than jewels or principalities is the tribute which his countrymen pay at his tomb.

The church of our Lady of Cazan contains another monument of barbarian patriotism. The celebrated leader of the Cossacks during the period of the French invasion, having intercepted a great part of the booty which the French were carrying from Moscow, sent it to the metropolitan or head of the church, with a characteristic letter, directing it to be "made into an image of the four Evangelists, and adorn the church of the Mother of God of Cazan." The concluding paragraph is, "Hasten to erect in the temple of God this monument of battle and victory; and while you erect it, say with thankfulness to Providence, the enemies of Russia are no more; the vengeance of God has overtaken them on the soil of Russia; and the road they have gone has been strewed with their bones, to the utter confusion of their frantic and proud ambition.

(Signed)

"PLATOFF."

From the church of our Lady of Cazan I went to the Protestant church, where I again joined in an orthodox service. The interior of the church is elegant, though externally it can scarcely be distinguished from a private building. The seats are free, the men sitting on one side and the women on the other. Mr. Law, the clergyman, has been there many years, and is respected and loved by his congregation. After church I walked to the convent of Alexander Newski, the burial-place of Prince Alexander, who obtained in the thirteenth century a splendid victory over the allied forces of Sweden, Denmark, and Livonia; afterward became a monk, and for his pure and holy life was canonized, and now ranks among the principal saints in the Russian calendar.

The warrior was first buried at Moscow, but Peter the Great had his remains transported with great ceremony to this place, a procession of a thousand priests walking barefoot all the way. The monastery stands at the extreme end of the Newski Perspective, and within its precincts are several churches and a large cemetery. It is the residence of the distinguished prelates of the Greek Church and a large fraternity of monks. The dress of the monks is a loose black cloak and round black cap, and no one can be admitted a member until the age of thirty. We entered a grand portal, walked up a long avenue, and, crossing a bridge over a stream, worked our way between lines of the carriages of nobles and ladies, and crowds of the people in their best bell-crowned hats; and, amid a throng of miserable beggars, penetrated to the door of the principal church, a large and beautiful specimen of modern Corinthian architecture. I remarked the great entrance, the lofty dome, the fresco paintings on the ceilings, and the arabesque decorations on the walls; the altar-piece of white Carrara marble, paintings by Rubens and Vandyck, the holy door in the iconastos, raised on a flight of steps of rich gilded bronze, and surmounted by the representation of a dazzling aureola of different colored metals, and in the centre the initials of that awful name which none in Israel save the initiated were permitted to pronounce. I walked around and paused before the tomb of the warrior saint.

A sarcophagus or coffin of massive silver, standing on an elevated platform, ornamented in bas-relief, representing scenes of battles with the Swedes, contains his relics; a rich ermine lies upon the coffin, and above is a silver canopy. On each side is a warrior clothed

VOL. II.—M

in armour, with his helmet, breastplate, shield, and spear, also of massive silver. The altar rises thirty feet in height, of solid silver, with groups of military figures and trophies of warriors, also of silver, as large as life; and over it hangs a golden lamp, with a magnificent candelabrum of silver, together with a vessel of curious workmanship holding the bones of several holy men, the whole of extraordinary magnificence and costliness of material, upward of four thousand pounds weight of silver having been used in the construction of the chapel and shrine. The dead sleep the same whether in silver coffins or in the bare earth, but the stately character of the church, dimly lighted, and the splendour and richness of the material, gave a peculiar solemnity to the tomb of the warrior saint.

Leaving the churches, I strolled through the cloisters of the monastery and entered the great cemetery. There, as in the great cemetery of Père la Chaise at Paris, all that respect, and love, and affection can do to honour the memory of the dead, and all that vanity and folly can do to ridicule it, have been accomplished. There are seen epitaphs of affecting brevity and elaborate amplification; every design, every device, figure, emblem, and decoration; every species of material, from native granite to Carrara marble and pure gold. Among the simpler tombs of poets, warriors, and statesmen, a monument of the most gigantic proportions is erected to snatch from oblivion the name of a rich Russian merchant. The base is a solid cubic block of the most superb marble, on which is a solid pedestal of black marble ten feet square, bearing a sarcophagus fourteen feet high, and of most elegant proportions, surmounted by a gold cross twenty feet in height. At each of the

four corners is a colossal candelabrum of cast iron, with entwining serpents of bronze gilded. The ground alone cost a thousand pounds, and the whole monument about twenty thousand dollars. Near the centre of this asylum of the dead, a tetrastyle Ionic temple of the purest white marble records the virtues of an interesting lady, the Countess of Potemkin; and alto relievos of the most exquisite execution on three sides of the temple tell the melancholy story of a mother snatched from three lovely children. The countess, prophetically conscious of her approaching fate, is looking up calmly and majestically to the figure of religion, and resting with confidence her left hand on the symbol of Christianity. In front are the inscription and arms of the family in solid gold.

But what are the Russian dead to me? The granite and marble monument of the merchant is a conglomeration of hides, hemp, and tallow; a man may be excused if he linger a moment at the tomb of an interesting woman, a mother cut off in her prime; but melancholy is infectious, and induces drowsiness and closing of the book.

In consideration for my valet, at the grand portal I took a drosky, rolled over the wooden pavement of the Newski Perspective, and, with hardly motion enough to disturb my revery, was set down at the door of my hotel. My Pole was waiting to dine with me, and roused me from my dreams of the dead to recount his dreams of the living. All day he had sat at his window, and a few straggling glances from the lady opposite had abundantly rewarded him, and given him great spirits for his evening's promenade on the Boulevards. I declined accompanying him, and he went alone, and

returned in the evening almost in raptures. We strolled an hour by the twilight, and retired early.

It will hardly be believed, but early the next morning he came to my room with a letter on fine pink paper addressed to his fair enslaver. The reader may remember that this was not the first time I had been made a confidant in an *affaire du cœur*. To be sure, the missionary at Smyrna turned out to be crazy; and on this point, at least, my Pole was a little touched; nevertheless, I listened to his epistle. It was the regular old-fashioned document, full of hanging, shooting, drowning, and other extravagances. He sealed it with an amatory device, and, calling up a servant in his confidence, told him to carry it over, and then took his place in my window to watch the result. In the mean time, finding it impossible to dislodge him, and that I could not count upon him to accompany me on my visits to the palaces as he had promised, I went to the Hermitage alone. The Great and Little Hermitages are connected with the Winter Palace and with each other by covered galleries, and the theatre is connected with the two Hermitages by means of another great arch thrown over a canal, so that the whole present a continued line of imperial palaces, unequalled in extent in any part of Europe, measuring one thousand five hundred and ninety-six feet, or one third of an English mile. If I were to select a building designed to realize the most extravagant notions of grandeur and luxury, it would be the gorgeous palace known under the modest name of the Hermitage. I shall not attempt any description of the interior of this splendid edifice, but confine myself to a brief enumeration of its contents. I ascended by a spacious staircase to the anteroom, where I gave, or,

rather, where my cane was demanded by the footman, and proceeded through a suite of magnificent rooms, every one surpassing the last, and richer in objects of the fine arts, science, and literature ; embellished throughout by a profusion of the most splendid ornaments and furniture, and remarkable for beauty of proportion and variety of design. In rooms and galleries appropriated to the separate schools and masters are upward of thirteen hundred paintings by Raphael, Titian, Guido, Andrea del Sarto, Luca Giordano, the Caracci, Perugino, Corregio, and Leonardi da Vinci ; here is also the best collection in existence, of pictures by Wouvermans and Teniers, with some of the masterpieces of Rubens and Vandyck, of the French Claude, Poussin, and Vernet. The celebrated Houghton collection is here, with a gallery of paintings of the Spanish schools, many of them Murillos. In one room is a superb vase of Siberian jasper, of a lilach colour, five feet high, and of exquisite form and polish ; in another are two magnificent candelabras, said to be valued at two hundred and twenty thousand rubles, or about fifty thousand dollars ; I must mention also the great musical clock, representing an antique Grecian temple, and containing within a combination of instruments, having the power of two orchestras, which accompany each other ; two golden tripods, seven feet high, supporting the gold salvers on which salt and bread were exhibited to the Emperor Alexander on his triumphal return from Paris, as emblems of wisdom and plenty, a large musical and magical secretary, which opens spontaneously in a hundred directions at the sound of music, purchased by the late emperor for eight hundred guineas ; a room surrounded with books, some of which were originals, placed there

by Catharine for the use of the domestics, as she said, to keep the devil out of their heads ; a saloon containing the largest collection of engravings and books of engravings in Europe, amounting to upward of thirty thousand ; a library of upward of one hundred and ten thousand volumes ; an extensive cabinet of medals, and another of gems and pastes ; a jewel-cabinet, containing the rich ornaments which have served for the toilettes of succeeding empresses, innumerable precious stones and pearls, many of extraordinary magnitude ; a superb collection of antiques and cameos, amounting to upward of fifteen thousand, the cameos alone affording employment for days. In one room are curious works in ivory and fishbones, by the inhabitants of Archangel, who are skilled in that species of workmanship ; and in another is the celebrated clock, known by the name of *L'Horloge du Paon*. It is enclosed in a large glass case ten feet high, being the trunk of a golden tree, with its branches and leaves all of gold. On the top of the trunk sits a peacock, which, when the chimes begin, expands its brilliant tail, while an owl rolls its eyes with its own peculiar stare, and, instead of a bell striking the hours, a golden cock flaps his wings and crows. The clock is now out of order, and the machinery is so complicated that no artist has hitherto been able to repair it.

But perhaps the most extraordinary and interesting of the wonders of the Hermitage are the Winter and Summer Gardens. As I strolled through the suites of apartments, and looked out through the windows of a long gallery, it was hardly possible to believe that the flourishing trees, shrubs, and flowers stood upon an artificial soil, raised nearly fifty feet above the surface of the earth.

The Winter Garden is a large quadrangular conservatory, planted with laurels and orange trees, in which linnets and Canary birds formerly flew about enjoying the freedom of nature ; but the feathered tribe have disappeared. The Summer Garden connected with it is four hundred feet long ; and here, suspended, as it were, in the air, near the top of the palace, I strolled along gravel-walks, and among parterres of shrubs and flowers growing in rich luxuriance, and under a thick foliage inhaled their delightful fragrance. It is idle to attempt a description of this scene.

I returned to my Pole, whom I found at his window with a melancholy and sentimental visage, his beautiful epistle returned upon his hands—having, in sportsman's phrase, entirely missed fire—and then lying with a most reproving look on his table. My friend had come up to St. Petersburg in consequence of a lawsuit, and as this occupied but a small portion of his time, he had involved himself in a lovesuit, and, so far as I could see, with about an equal chance of success in both. L'amour was the great business of his life, and he could not be content unless he had on hand what he called *une affaire du cœur*.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Imperial Fête.—Nicolas of Russia.—Varied Splendours.—A Soliloquy.—House of Peter the Great.—A Boatrace.—Czarskoselo.—The Amber Chamber.—Catharine II.—The Emperor Alexander.

THE next day was that appointed for the great fête at Peterhoff. In spite of the confining nature of his two suits, my Pole had determined to accompany me thither, being prompted somewhat by the expectation of seeing his damsel; and, no way disheartened by the fate of his first letter, he had manufactured another, by comparison with which the first was an icicle. I admitted it to be a masterpiece, though when he gave it to a servant to carry over, as we were on the point of setting off, suggested that it might be worth while to wait and pick it up when she threw it out of the window. But he had great confidence, and thought much better of her spirit for sending back his first letter.

The whole population of Petersburgh was already in motion and on the way to Peterhoff. It was expected that the fête would be more than usually splendid, on account of the presence of the Queen of Holland, then on a visit to her sister the empress; and at an early hour the splendid equipages of the nobility, carriages, droskys, telegas, and carts, were hurrying along the banks of the Neva, while steamboats, sailboats, rowboats, and craft of every description were gliding on the bosom of the river.

As the least trouble, we chose a steamboat, and at twelve o'clock embarked at the English Quay. The

boat was crowded with passengers, and among them was an old English gentleman, a merchant of thirty years' standing in St. Petersburg. I soon became acquainted with him, how I do not know, and his lady told me that the first time I passed them she remarked to her husband that I was an American. The reader may remember that a lady made the same remark at Smyrna; without knowing exactly how to understand it, I mention it as a fact showing the nice discrimination acquired by persons in the habit of seeing travellers from different countries. Before landing, the old gentleman told me that his boys had gone down in a pleasure-boat, abundantly provided with materials, and asked me to go on board and lunch with them, which, upon the invitation being extended to my friend, I accepted.

Peterhoff is about twenty-five versts from St. Petersburg, and the whole bank of the Neva on that side is adorned with palaces and beautiful summer residences of the Russian seigneurs. It stands at the mouth of the Neva, on the borders of the Gulf of Finland. Opposite is the city of Cronstadt, the seaport of St. Petersburg and the anchorage of the Russian fleet. It was then crowded with merchant ships of every nation, with flags of every colour streaming from their spars in honour of the day. On landing, we accompanied our new friends, and found "the boys," three fine young fellows just growing up to manhood, in a handsome little pleasure-boat, with a sail arranged as an awning, waiting for their parents. We were introduced and received with open arms, and sat down to a cold collation in good old English style, at which, for the first time since I left home, I fastened upon an old-fashioned sirloin of roastbeef. It was a delightful meeting for me. The

old people talked to me about my travels ; and the old lady particularly, with almost a motherly interest in a straggling young man, inquired about my parents, brothers, and sisters, &c. ; and I made my way with the frankhearted "boys" by talking "boat." Altogether, it was a regular home family scene ; and, after the lunch, we left the old people under the awning, promising to return at nine o'clock for tea, and with "the boys" set off to view the fête.

From the time when we entered the grounds until we left at three o'clock the next morning, the whole was a fairy scene. The grounds extended some distance along the shore, and the palace stands on an embankment perhaps a hundred and fifty feet high, commanding a full view of the Neva, Cronstadt with its shipping, and the Gulf of Finland. We followed along the banks of a canal five hundred yards long, bordered by noble trees. On each side of the canal were large wooden frames about sixty feet high, filled with glass lamps for the illumination ; and at the foot of each was another high framework with lamps, forming, among other things, the arms of Russia, the double-headed eagle, and under it a gigantic star thirty or forty feet in diameter. At the head of the canal was a large basin of water, and in the centre of the basin stood a colossal group in brass, of a man tearing open the jaws of a rampant lion ; and out of the mouth of the lion rushed a jet d'eau perhaps a hundred and fifty feet high. On each side of this basin, at a distance of about three hundred feet, was a smaller basin, with a jet d'eau in each about half its height, and all around were jets d'eau of various kinds, throwing water vertically and horizontally ; among them I remember a figure larger than life, leaning forward in

the attitude of a man throwing the discus, with a powerful stream of water rushing from his clinched fist. These basins were at the foot of the embankment on which stands the palace. In the centre was a broad flight of steps leading to the palace, and on each side was a continuous range of marble slabs to the top of the hill, over which poured down a sheet of water, the slabs being placed so high and far apart as to allow lamps to be arranged behind the water. All over, along the public walks and in retired alcoves, were frames hung with lamps; and everywhere, under the trees and on the open lawn, were tents of every size and fashion, beautifully decorated; many of them, oriental in style and elegance, were fitted up as places of refreshment. Thousands of people, dressed in their best attire, were promenading the grounds, but no vehicles were to be seen, until, in turning a point, we espied at some distance up an avenue, and coming quietly toward us, a plain open carriage, with two horses and two English jockey outriders, in which were a gentleman and lady, whom, without the universal taking off of hats around us, I recognised at once as the emperor and empress. I am not apt to be carried away by any profound admiration for royalty, but, without consideration of their rank, I never saw a finer specimen of true gentility; in fact, he looked every inch a king, and she was my beau ideal of a queen in appearance and manners. They bowed as they passed, and, as I thought, being outside of the line of Russians and easily recognised as a stranger, their courtesy was directed particularly to me; but I found that my companion took it very much to himself, and no doubt every long-bearded Russian near us did the same. In justice to myself, however,

I may almost say that I had a conversation with the emperor; for although his imperial highness did not speak to me, he spoke in a language which none but I (and the queen and his jockey outriders) understood; for, waving his hand to them, I heard him say in English, "To the right." After this *interview* with his majesty we walked up to the palace. The splendid regiments of cavalier guards were drawn up around it, every private carrying himself like a prince; and I did not admire all his palaces, nor hardly his queen, so much as this splendid body of armed followers. Behind the palace is a large plain cut up into gravel-walks, having in one place a basin of water, with waterworks of various kinds, among which were some of peculiar beauty falling in the form of a semiglobe.

A little before dark we retired to a refectory under a tent until the garden was completely lighted up, that we might have the full effect of the illumination at one coup d'œil, and, when we went out, the dazzling brilliancy of the scene within the semicircular illumination around the waterworks was beyond description. This semicircular framework enclosed in a large sweep the three basins, and terminated at the embankment on which the palace stands, presenting all around an immense fiery scroll in the air, sixty or eighty feet high, and filled with all manner of devices; and for its background a broad sheet of water falling over a range of steps, with lighted lamps behind it, forming an illuminated cascade, while the basins were blazing with the light thrown upon them from myriads of lamps, and the colossal figures of a reddened and unearthly hue were spouting columns of water into the air. More than two hundred thousand people were supposed to be assem-

bled in the garden, in every variety of gay, brilliant, and extraordinary costume. St. Petersburg was half depopulated, and thousands of peasants were assembled from the neighbouring provinces. I was accidentally separated from all my companions; and, alone among thousands, sat down on the grass, and for an hour watched the throng passing through the illuminated circle, and ascending the broad steps leading toward the palace. Among all this immense crowd there was no rabble; not a dress that could offend the eye; but intermingled with the ordinary costumes of Europeans were the Russian shopkeeper, with his long surtout, his bell-crowned hat, and solemn beard; Cossacks, and Circassian soldiers, and Calmuc Tartars, and cavalier guards; hussars, with the sleeves of their rich jackets dangling loose over their shoulders, tossing plumes, and helmets glittering with steel, intermingled throughout with the gay dresses of ladies; while near me, and, like me, carelessly stretched on the grass, under the light of thousands of lamps, was a group of peasants from Finland fiddling and dancing; the women with light hair, bands around their heads, and long jackets enwrapping their square forms, and the men with long greatcoats, broad-brimmed hats, and a bunch of shells in front.

Leaving this brilliant scene, I joined the throng on the steps, and by the side of a splendid hussar, stooping his manly figure to whisper in the ears of a lovely young girl, I ascended to the palace and presented my ticket of admission to the *bal masqué*, so called from their being no masks there. I had not been presented at court, and, consequently, had only admission to the outer apartments with the people. I had, however, the range of a succession of splendid rooms, richly decorated with vases

and tazzas of precious stones, candelabras, couches, ottomans, superb mirrors, and inlaid floors ; and the centre room, extending several hundred feet in length, had its lofty walls covered to the very ceilings with portraits of all the female beauties in Russia about eighty years ago. I was about being tired of gazing at these pictures of long-sleeping beauties, when the great doors at one end were thrown open, and the emperor and empress, attended by the whole court, passed through on their way to the banqueting-hall. Although I had been in company with the emperor before in the garden, and though I had taken off my hat to the empress, both passed without recognising me. The court at St. Petersburg is admitted to be the most brilliant in Europe ; the dresses of the members of the diplomatic corps and the uniforms of the general and staff-officers being really magnificent, while those of the ladies sparkled with jewels. Besides the emperor and empress, the only acquaintance I recognised in that constellation of brilliantly-dressed people were Mr. Wilkins and Mr. Clay, who, for republicans, made a very fair blaze. I saw them enter the banqueting-hall, painted in oriental style to represent a tent, and might have had the pleasure of seeing the emperor and empress and all that brilliant collection eat ; but, turning away from a noise that destroyed much of the illusion, viz., the clatter of knives and forks, and a little piqued at the cavalier treatment I had received from the court circles, I went out on the balcony and soliloquized, "Fine feathers make fine birds ; but look back a little, ye dashing cavaliers and supercilious ladies. In the latter part of the seventeenth century, a French traveller in Russia wrote that 'most men treat their wives as a

necessary evil, regarding them with a proud and stern eye, and even beating them after.' Dr. Collins, physician to the Czar in 1670, as an evidence of the progress of civilization in Russia, says that the custom of tying up wives by the hair of the head and flogging them 'begins to be left off;' accounting for it, however, by the prudence of parents, who made a stipulative provision in the marriage contract that their daughters were not to be whipped, struck, kicked, &c. But, even in this improved state of society, one man 'put upon his wife a shirt dipped in ardent spirits, and burned her to death,' and was not punished, there being, according to the doctor, 'no punishment in Russia for killing a wife or a slave.' When no provision was made in the marriage contract, he says they were accustomed to discipline their wives very severely. At the marriage the bridegroom had a whip in one boot and a jewel in the other, and the poor girl tried her fortune by choosing. 'If she happens upon the jewel,' says another traveller, 'she is lucky; but if on the whip, she gets it.' The bridegroom rarely saw his companion's face till after the marriage, when, it is said, 'If she be ugly she pays for it soundly, maybe the first time he sees her.' Ugliness being punished with the whip, the women painted to great excess; and a traveller in sixteen hundred and thirty-six saw the grand duchess and her ladies on horseback astride, 'most wickedly bepainted.' The day after a lady had been at an entertainment, the hostess was accustomed to ask how she got home; and the polite answer was, 'Your ladyship's hospitality made me so tipsy that I don't know how I got home;' and for the climax of their barbarity it can scarcely be believed, but it is recorded as a fact, that the women did

not begin to wear stays till the beginning of the present century !”

Soothed by these rather ill-natured reflections, I turned to the illuminated scene and the thronging thousands below, descended once more to the garden, passed down the steps, worked my way through the crowd, and fell into a long avenue, like all the rest of the garden, brilliantly lighted, but entirely deserted. At the end of the avenue I came to an artificial lake, opposite which was a small square two-story cottage, being the old residence of Peter the Great, the founder of all the magnificence of Peterhoff. It was exactly in the style of our ordinary country houses, and the furniture was of a simplicity that contrasted strangely with the surrounding luxury and splendour. The door opened into a little hall, in which were two oldfashioned Dutch mahogany tables, with oval leaves, legs tapering and enlarging at the feet into something like a horseshoe; just such a table as every one may remember in his grandfather's house, and recalling to mind the simple style of our own country some thirty or forty years ago. In a room on one side was the old Czar's bed, a low, broad wooden bedstead, with a sort of canopy over it, the covering of the canopy and the coverlet being of striped calico; the whole house, inside and out, was hung with lamps, illumining with a glare that was almost distressing the simplicity of Peter's residence; and, as if to give greater contrast to this simplicity, while I was standing in the door of the hall, I saw roll by me in splendid equipages, the emperor and empress, with the whole of the brilliant court which I had left in the banqueting-hall, now making a tour of the gardens. The carriages were all of one pattern, long, hung low,

without any tops, and somewhat like our omnibuses, except that, instead of the seats being on one side, there was a partition in the middle not higher than the back of a sofa, with large seats like sofas on each side, on which the company sat in a row, with their backs to each other; in front was a high and large box for the coachmen, and a footman behind. It was so light that I could distinguish the face of every gentleman and lady as they passed; and there was something so unique in the exhibition, that, with the splendour of the court dresses, it seemed the climax of the brilliant scenes at Peterhoff. I followed them with my eyes till they were out of sight, gave one more look to the modest pillow on which old Peter reposed his careworn head, and at about one o'clock in the morning left the garden. A frigate brilliantly illuminated was firing a salute, the flash of her guns lighting up the dark surface of the water as I embarked on board the steamboat. At two o'clock the morning twilight was like that of day; at three o'clock I was at my hotel, and, probably, at ten minutes past, asleep.

About eight o'clock the next morning my Pole came into my room. He had returned from Peterhoff before me, and found waiting for him his second epistle, with a note from the mother of the young lady, which he read to me as I lay in bed. Though more than half asleep, I was rather roused by the strange effect this letter had upon him, for he was now encouraged to go on with his suit, since he found that the backwardness of the young lady was to be ascribed to the influence of the mother, and not to any indifference on her part.

In the afternoon I went to a boatrace between English amateurs that had excited some interest among the

English residents. The boats were badly matched; a six-oared boat thirty-two feet long, and weighing two hundred and thirty pounds, being pitted against three pairs of sculls, with a boat twenty-eight feet long and weighing only one hundred and eight pounds. One belonged to the English legation and the other to some English merchants. The race was from the English Quay to the bridge opposite the Suwarrow monument at the foot of the Summer Garden, and back, a little more than two miles each way. The rapidity of the current was between two and three miles an hour, though its full strength was avoided by both boats keeping in the eddies along shore. It was a beautiful place for a boatrace; the banks of the Neva were lined with spectators, and the six-oared boat beat easily, performing the distance in thirty-one minutes.

The next morning, in company with a Frenchman lately arrived at our hotel, I set out for the imperial palace of Czarskoselo, about seventeen versts from St. Petersburg. About seven versts from the city we passed the imperial seat of Zechenne, built by the Empress Catharine to commemorate the victory obtained by Orloff over the Turks on the coast of Anatolia. The edifice is in the form of a Turkish pavilion, with a central rotunda containing the full-length portraits of the sovereigns cotemporary with Catharine. Since her death this palace has been deserted. In eighteen hundred and twenty-five, Alexander and the empress passed it on their way to the south of Russia, and about eight months after their mortal remains found shelter in it for a night, on their way to the imperial sepulchre. There was no other object of interest on the road until we approached Czarskoselo. Opposite the "Caprice Gate"

is a cluster of white houses, in two rows, of different sizes, diminishing as they recede from the road, and converging at the farthest extremity; altogether a bizarre arrangement, and showing the magnificence of Russian gallantry. The Empress Catharine at the theatre one night happened to express her pleasure at the perspective view of a small town, and the next time she visited Czarskoselo she saw the scene realized in a town erected by Count Orloff at immense expense before the gate of the palace. The façade of the palace is unequalled by any royal residence in the world, being twelve hundred feet in length. Originally, every statue, pedestal, and capital of the numerous columns; the vases, carvings, and other ornaments in front, were covered with gold leaf, the gold used for that purpose amounting to more than a million of ducats. In a few years the gilding wore off, and the contractors engaged in repairing it offered the empress nearly half a million of rubles (silver) for the fragments of gold; but the empress scornfully refused, saying, "Je ne suis pas dans l'usage de vendre mes vieilles hardes." I shall not attempt to carry the reader through the magnificent apartments of this palace. But I must not forget the famed amber chamber, the whole walls and ceilings being of amber, some of the pieces of great size, neatly fitted together, and even the frames of the pictures an elaborate workmanship of the same precious material. But even this did not strike me so forcibly as when, conducted through a magnificent apartment, the walls covered with black paper shining like ebony, and ornamented with gold and immense looking-glasses, the footman opened a window at the other end, and we looked down into the chapel, an Asiatic structure, presenting an *ensemble* of

rich gilding of surpassing beauty, every part of it, the groups of columns, the iconastos, and the gallery for the imperial family, resplendent with gold. In one of the staterooms where the empress's mother resides, the floor consists of a parquet of fine wood inlaid with wreaths of mother-of-pearl, and the panels of the room were incrustated with lapis lazuli.

But to me all these magnificent chambers were as nothing compared with those which were associated with the memory of the late occupant. "Uneasy rests the head that wears a crown;" and perhaps it is for this reason that I like to look upon the pillow of a king, far more on that of a queen. The bedchamber of Catharine II. is adorned with walls of porcelain and pillars of purple glass; the bedclothes are those under which she slept the last time she was at the palace, and in one place was a concealed door, by which, as the unmannerly footman, without any respect to her memory, told us, her imperial highness admitted her six-foot paramours. In the bedchamber of Alexander were his cap, gloves, boots, and other articles of dress, lying precisely as he left them previous to his departure for the southern part of his empire. His bed was of leather, stuffed with straw, and his boots were patched over and over worse than mine, which I had worn all the way from Paris. I tried on his cap and gloves, and moralized over his patched boots. I remembered Alexander as the head of a gigantic empire, the friend and ally, and then the deadly foe of Napoleon; the companion of kings and princes; the arbiter of thrones and empires, and playing with crowns and sceptres. I sat with the patched boots in my hand. Like old Peter, he had considerable of a foot, and I respected him for it.

I saw him, as it were, in an undress, simple and unostentatious in his habits; and there was a domestic air in his whole suite of apartments that interested me more than when I considered him on his throne. His sitting-room showed quiet and gentlemanly as well as domestic habits, for along the wall was a border of earth, with shrubs and flowers growing out of it, a delicate vine trailed around and almost covering a little mahogany railing. The grounds around the palace are eighteen miles in circumference, abounding in picturesque and beautiful scenery, improved by taste and an unbounded expenditure of money, and at this time they were in the fulness of summer beauty. We may talk simplicity and republicanism, but, after all, it must be a pleasant thing to be an emperor. I always felt this, particularly when strolling through imperial parks or pleasure-grounds, and sometimes I almost came to the unsentimental conclusion that, to be rural, a man must be rich.

We wandered through the grounds without any plan, taking any path that offered, and at every step some new beauty broke upon us: a theatre; Turkish kiosk or Chinese pagoda; splendid bridges, arches, and columns; and an Egyptian gate; a summer-house in the form of an Ionic colonnade, a masterpiece of taste and elegance, supporting an aerial garden crowded with flowers; and a Gothic building called the Admiralty, on the borders of an extensive lake, on which lay several boats rigged as frigates, elegant barges and pleasure-boats, and beautiful white swans floating majestically upon its surface; on the islands and the shores of the lake were little summer-houses; at the other end was a magnificent stone landing, and in full view a marble bridge, with Corinthian columns of polished marble; an

arsenal, with many curious and interesting objects, antique suits of armour, and two splendid sets of horse trappings, holsters, pistols, and bridles, all studded with diamonds, presented by the sultan on occasion of the peace of Adrianople. Nor must I forget the dairy, and a superb collection of goats and lamas from Siberia. Amid this congregation of beauties one thing offended me; a Gothic tower built as a ruin for the sake of the picturesque, which, wanting the associations connected with monuments ruined by time, struck me as a downright mockery. We had intended to visit the palace of Paulowsky, but time slipped away, and it was six o'clock before we started to return to St. Petersburg.

CHAPTER IX.

The Soldier's Reward.—Review of the Russian Army.—American Cannibals.—Palace of Potemkin.—Palace of the Grand-duke Michael.—Equipments for Travelling.—Rough Riding.—Poland.—Vitepsk.—Napoleon in Poland.—The Disastrous Retreat.—Passage of the Berezina.

EARLY the next morning I went out about twelve versts from the city to attend a grand military review by the emperor in person. The government of Russia is a military despotism, and her immense army, nominally amounting to a million, even on the peace establishment numbers actually six hundred thousand, of which sixty thousand follow the person of the emperor, and were at that time under arms at St. Petersburg. When I rode on the parade-ground, the spectacle of this great army, combining the élite of barbaric

chivalry with soldiers trained in the best schools of European discipline, drawn up in battle's stern array, and glittering with steel, was brilliant and almost sublime; in numbers and military bearing, in costliness of armour and equipment, far surpassing any martial parade that I had seen, not excepting a grand review of French troops at Paris, or even a *fourth of July parade at home*. I once had the honour to be a paymaster in the valiant one hundred and ninety-seventh regiment of New-York State Militia; and I can say what, perhaps, no other man who ever served in our *army* can say, that I served out my whole term without being once promoted. Men came in below and went out above me; ensigns became colonels and lieutenants generals, but I remained the same; it was hard work to escape promotion, but I was resolute. Associated with me was a friend as quartermaster, with as little of the spirit of a soldier in him as myself, for which we were rather looked down upon by the warriors of our day; and when, at the end of our term, in company with several other officers, we resigned, the next regimental orders were filled with military panegyrics, such as, "the colonel has received, with the greatest regret, the resignation of Lieutenant A.;" "the country has reason to deplore the loss of the services of Captain B.;" and wound up with, "Quartermaster G. and Paymaster S. have tendered their resignations, *both of which are hereby accepted.*" But when strains of martial music burst from a hundred bands, and companies, and regiments, and brigades wheeled and manœuvred before me, and the emperor rode by, escorted by general and field officers, and the most magnificent staff in

Europe, and the earth shook under the charge of cavalry, I felt a strong martial spirit roused within me; perhaps I was excited by the reflection that these soldiers had been in battles, and that the stars and medals glittering on their breasts were not mere holiday ornaments, but the tokens of desperate service on bloody battle-fields.

In a body, the Russian soldiers present an exceedingly fine appearance. When the serf is enrolled, his hair and beard are cut off, except on the upper lip, his uniform is simple and graceful, a belt is worn tightly round the waist, and the breast of the coat is thickly padded, increasing the manliness of the figure, though sometimes at the expense of health. In evolutions they move like a great machine, as if all the arms and legs were governed by a single impulse.

The army under review was composed of representatives from all the nations under the sway of Russia; Cossacks of the Don, and the Wolga, and the Black Sea, in jackets and wide pantaloons of blue cloth, riding on small horses, with high-peaked saddles, and carrying spears eight or ten feet in length. One regiment had the privilege of wearing a ragged flag and caps full of holes, as proofs of their gallant service, being the only regiment that fought at Pultowa. And there were Calmucs in their extraordinary war-dress; a helmet with a gilded crest, or a chain cap with a network of iron rings falling over the head and shoulders, and hanging as low as the eyebrows in front; a shirt of mail, composed of steel rings matted together and yielding to the body; the arms protected by plates, and the back of the hand by steel network fastened to the plates on each side;

their offensive weapons were bows and arrows, silver-mounted pistols peeping out of their holsters, cartridge-boxes on each side of the breast, and a dagger, sword, and gun.

The Kirguish, a noble-looking race, come from the steppes of Siberia. Their uniform is magnificent, consisting of a blue frockcoat and pantaloons covered with silver lace, a Grecian helmet, and a great variety of splendid arms, the yataghan alone costing a thousand rubles. They are all noble, and have no regular duty, except to attend the imperial family on extraordinary occasions. At home they are always at war among themselves. They are Mohammedans; and one of them said to an American friend who had a long conversation with him, that he had four wives at home; that some had more, but it was not considered becoming to exceed that number. A bearded Russian came up and said that these Kirguish eat dogs and cats, against which the Kirguish protested. The same Russian afterward observed that the Americans were worse than the Kirguish, for that a patriarch of the church had written, and therefore it must be true, that the number of human beings eaten by Americans could not be counted; adding, with emphasis, "Sir, you were created in the likeness of your Maker, and you should endeavour to keep yourself so." He continued that the Russians were the first Christians, and he felt much disposed to send missionaries among the Americans to meliorate their condition.

The Imperial Guards are the finest-looking set of men I ever saw. The standard is six feet, and none are admitted below that height. Their uniform is a white cloth coat, with buckskin breeches, boots reaching

up to the hips, and swords that Wallace himself would not have been ashamed to wield. But perhaps the most striking in that brilliant army was the emperor himself; seeming its natural head, towering even above his gigantic guards, and looking, as Mr. Wilkins once said of him, like one who, among savages, would have been chosen for a chief. In the midst of this martial spectacle, the thought came over me of militia musters at home; and though smiling at the insignificance of our military array as I rode back in my drosky, I could but think of the happiness of our isolated position, which spares us the necessity of keeping a large portion of our countrymen constantly in arms to preserve the rest in the enjoyment of life and fortune.

The next morning my Polish friend, hopeless of success either in his lawsuit or his lovesuit, fixed a day for our departure; and, with the suggestion that I am about leaving St. Petersburg, I turn once more, and for the last time, to the imperial palaces. Not far from the Hermitage is the marble palace; a colossal pile, built by the Empress Catharine for her favourite, Count Orloff, presenting one of its fronts to the Neva. All the decorations are of marble and gilded bronze, and the capitals and bases of the columns and pilasters, and the window-frames and balustrades of the balconies, of cast bronze richly gilded. The effect is heightened by the unusually large dimensions of the squares of fine plate glass. A traveller in seventeen hundred and fifty-nine says "that the prodigies of enchantment which we read of in the tales of the genii are here called forth into reality; and the temples reared by the luxuriant fancy of our poets may be considered as a picture of the marble palace, which Jupiter, when the burden of cares

drives him from heaven, might make his delightful abode." At present, however, there are but few remains of this Olympian magnificence, and I think Jupiter at the same expense would prefer the Winter Palace or the Hermitage.

The Taurida Palace, erected by Catharine II. for her lover, Potemkin, in general effect realizes the exaggerated accounts of travellers. The entrance is into a spacious hall, which leads to a circular vestibule of extraordinary magnitude, decorated with busts and statues in marble, with a dome supported by white columns. From thence you pass between the columns into an immense hall or ballroom, two hundred and eighty feet long and eighty wide, with double colonnades of lofty Ionic pillars decorated with gold and silver festoons, thirty-five feet high and ten feet in circumference. From the colonnade, running the whole length of the ballroom, you enter the Winter Garden, which concealed flues and stoves keep always at the temperature of summer; and here, upon great occasions, under the light of magnificent lustres and the reflection of numerous mirrors, during the fierceness of the Russian winter, when the whole earth is covered with snow, and "water tossed in the air drops down in ice," the imperial visiter may stroll through gravel-walks bordered with the choicest plants and flowers, blooming hedges and groves of orange, and inhale the fragrance of an Arabian garden. Paul, in one of his "darkened hours," converted this palace into barracks and a riding-school; but it has since been restored, in some degree, to its ancient splendour.

The palace of Paul, in which he was assassinated, has been uninhabited since his death. But the tri-

umph of modern architecture in St. Petersburg is the palace of the Grand-duke Michael. I shall not attempt any description of this palace; but, to give some notion of its splendours to my calculating countrymen, I shall, merely remark that it cost upward of seventeen millions of rubles. But I am weary of palaces; of wandering through magnificent apartments, where scene after scene bursts upon my eyes, and, before I begin to feel at home in them, I find myself ordered out by the footman. Will the reader believe me? On the opposite side of the river is a little wooden house, more interesting in my eyes than all the palaces in St. Petersburg. It is the humble residence of Peter the Great. I visited it for the last time after rambling through the gorgeous palace of the Grand-duke Michael. It is one story high, low roofed, with a little piazza around it, and contains a sitting-room, bedroom, and dining-parlours; and Peter himself, with his own axe, assisted in its construction. The rooms are only eight feet in height, the sitting-room is fifteen feet square, the dining-room fifteen feet by twelve, and the bedchamber ten feet square. In the first there is a chapel and shrine, where the Russian visiter performs his orisons and prays for the soul of Peter. Around the cottage is a neat garden, and a boat made by Peter himself is suspended to one of the walls. I walked around the cottage, inside and out; listened attentively, without understanding a word he said, to the garrulous Russian cicerone, and sat down on the step of the front piazza. Opposite was that long range of imperial palaces extending for more than a mile on the Neva, and surpassing all other royal residences in Europe or the world. When Peter sat in the door of this humble cottage, the

ground where they stood was all morass and forest. Where I saw the lofty spires of magnificent churches, he looked out upon fishermen's huts. My eyes fell upon the golden spire of the church of the citadel glittering in the sunbeams, and reminding me that in its dismal charnelhouse slept the tenant of the humble cottage, the master-spirit which had almost created out of nothing all this splendour. I saw at the same time the beginning and the end of greatness. The humble dwelling is preserved with religious reverence, and even now is the most interesting monument which the imperial city can show.

And here, at this starting-point in her career, I take my leave of the Palmyra of the North. I am compelled to omit many things which he who speaks of St. Petersburg at all ought not to omit: her magnificent churches; her gigantic and splendid theatres; her literary, scientific, and eleemosynary institutions, and that which might form the subject of a chapter in her capital, her government and laws. I might have seen something of Russian society, as my friend Luoff had arrived in St. Petersburg; but, with my limited time, the interchange of these civilities interfered with my seeing the curiosities of the capital.

My intimacy with the colonel had fallen off, though we still were on good terms. The fact is, I believe I fell into rather queer company in St. Petersburg, and very soon found the colonel to be the most thorough roué I ever met. He seemed to think that travelling meant dissipating; he had never travelled but once, and that was with the army to Paris; and, except when on duty, his whole time had been spent in riot and dissipation; and though sometimes he referred to

hard fighting, he talked more of the pleasures of that terrible campaign than of its toils and dangers. In consideration of my being a stranger and a young man, he constituted himself my Mentor, and the advice which, in all soberness, he gave me as the fruits of his experience, was a beautiful guide for the road to ruin. I have no doubt that, if I had given myself up entirely to him, he would have fêted me all the time I was in St. Petersburg; but this did not suit me, and I afterward fell in with the Pole, who had his own vagaries too, and who, being the proprietor of a cloth manufactory, did not suit the aristocratic notions of the colonel, and so our friendship cooled. My intimacy with his friend the prince, however, increased. I called upon him frequently, and he offered to accompany me everywhere; but as in sightseeing I love to be alone, I seldom asked him, except for a twilight walk. Old associations were all that now bound together him and the colonel; their feelings, their fortunes, and their habits of life were entirely different; and the colonel, instead of being displeased with my seeking the prince in preference to himself, was rather gratified. Altogether, the colonel told me, he was much mistaken in me, but he believed I was a good fellow after all; excused my regular habits somewhat on the ground of my health; and the day before that fixed for my departure, asked me to pass the evening with him, and to bring my friend the Pole. In the evening we went to the colonel's apartments. The prince was there, and, after an elegant little supper, happening to speak of a Frenchman and a Prussian living in the hotel, with whom I had become acquainted, he sent down for them to come up and join us. The table was cleared, pipes and tobacco were

brought on, and Champagne was the only wine. We had a long and interesting conversation on the subject of the road to Warsaw, and particularly in regard to the bloody passage of the Berezina, at which both the colonel and the prince were present. The servant, a favourite serf (who the next day robbed the colonel of every valuable article in his apartment), being clumsy in opening a new bottle of Champagne, the colonel said he must return to army practice, and reaching down his sabre, with a scientific blow took off the neck without materially injuring the bottle or disturbing the contents. This military way of decanting Champagne aided its circulation, and head after head fell rapidly before the naked sabre. I had for some time avoided emptying my glass, which, in the general hurry of business, was not noticed; but, as soon as the colonel discovered it, he cried out, "Treason, treason against good fellowship. America is a traitor." I pleaded ill health, but he would not listen to me; upbraided me that the friend and old ally of Russia should fail him; turned up his glass on the table, and swore he would not touch it again unless I did him justice. All followed his example; all decided that America was disturbing the peace of nations; the glasses were turned up all around, and a dead stop was put to the merriment. I appealed, begged, and protested; and the colonel became positive, dogged, and outrageous. The prince came to my aid, and proposed that the difficulty between Russia and America should be submitted to the arbitration of France and Prussia. He had observed these powers rather backing out. The eyes of France were already in a fine phrensy rolling, and Prussia's tongue had long been wandering; and, in apprehension of their own fate,

these mighty powers leaned to mercy. It was necessary, however, to propitiate the colonel, and they decided that, to prevent the effusion of blood, I should start once more the flow of wine; that we should begin again with a bumper all around; and, after that, every man should do as he pleased. The colonel was obliged to be content; and swearing that he would drink for us all, started anew.

The Prussian was from Berlin, and this led the colonel to speak of the stirring scenes that had taken place in that capital on the return of the Russian army from Paris; and, after a while, the Prussian, personally unknown to the colonel, told him that his name was still remembered in Berlin as a leader in Russian riot and dissipation, and particularly as having carried off, in a most daring manner, a lady of distinguished family; and—"go on," said the colonel—"killed her husband." "He refused my challenge," said the colonel, "but sought my life, and I shot him like a dog." The whole party now became uproarious; the colonel begged me, by all the friendly relations between Russia and America, to hold on till breakfast-time; but, being the coolest man present, and not knowing what farther developments might take place, I broke up the party.

In the morning my passport was not ready. I went off to the police-office for it, and when I returned the horses had not come, and the valet brought me the usual answer, that there were none. My Pole was glad to linger another day for the sake of his flirtation with the little girl opposite, and so we lounged through the day, part of the time in the bazar of a Persian, where I came near ruining myself by an offer I made for a beautiful emerald; and after one more and the last twilight

stroll on the banks of the Neva and up the Newski Perspective, we returned at an early hour, and for the last time in Russia, slept in a bed.

At nine o'clock the next morning a kibitka drove up to the door of our hotel, demanding an American and a Pole for Warsaw. All the servants of the hotel were gathered around, arranging the luggage, and making a great parade of getting off the distinguished travellers. The travellers themselves seemed equipped for a long journey. One wore a blue roundabout jacket, military cap and cloak, with whiskers and a mustache tending to red; the other, a tall, stout, Herculean fellow, was habited in the most outré costume of a Russian traveller; a cotton dressing-gown of every variety of colours, red and yellow predominating; coarse gray trousers; boots coming above his knees; a cap *tout a fait farouche*, and there was no mistake about the colour of his hair and mustaches; he was moving slowly around the kibitka in his travelling dress, and looking up to the window opposite, to give his dulcinea the melancholy intelligence that he was going away, and perhaps to catch one farewell smile at parting. The carriage of these distinguished travellers was the kibitka, one of the national vehicles of Russia, being a long, round-bottomed box or cradle on four wheels, probably the old Scythian wagon, resting, in proud contempt of the effeminacy of springs, on the oaken axles; the hubs of the wheels were two feet long, the linchpins of wood, the body of the carriage fastened to the wheels by wooden pins, ropes, and sticks; and, except the tires of the wheels, there was not a nail or piece of iron about it. The hinder part was covered with matting, open in front somewhat like an old-fashioned bonnet, and supported

by an arched stick, which served as a linchpin for the hind wheels; a bucket of grease hung under the hind axle, and the bottom of the kibitka was filled with straw; whole cost of outfit, thirteen dollars. Before it were three horses, one in shafts and one on each side, the centre one having a high bow over his neck, painted yellow and red, to which a rein was tied for holding up his head, and also a bell, to a Russian postillion more necessary than harness. The travellers took their places in the bottom of the kibitka, and the postillion, a rough, brutal-looking fellow, in gray coat and hat turned up at the sides, mounted in front, catching a seat where he could on the rim of the wagon, about three inches wide; and in this dashing equipage we started for a journey of a thousand miles to the capital of another kingdom. We rolled for the last time through the streets of St. Petersburg, gazed at the domes, and spires, and magnificent palaces, and in a few moments passed the barrier.

I left St. Petersburg, as I did every other city, with a certain feeling of regret that, in all probability, I should never see it more; still the cracking of the postillion's whip and the galloping of the horses created in me that high excitement which I always felt in setting out for a new region. Our first stage was to Czarskoselo, our second to Cazena, where there was another palace. It was dark when we reached the third, a small village, of which I did not even note the name. I shall not linger on this road, for it was barren of interest and incident, and through a continued succession of swamps and forests. For two hundred miles it tried the tenure of adhesion between soul and body, being made of the trunks of trees laid transversely, bound down by long poles or

beams fastened into the ground with wooden pegs, covered with layers of boughs, and the whole strewed over with sand and earth; the trunks in general were decayed and sunken, and the sand worn or washed away, reminding me of the worst of our western corduroy roads. Our wagon being without springs, and our seats a full-length extension on straw on the bottom, without the bed, pillows, and cushions which the Russians usually have, I found this ride one of the severest trials of physical endurance I ever experienced. My companion groaned and brushed his mustaches, and talked of the little girl at St. Petersburg. In my previous journey in Russia I had found the refreshment of tea, and on this, often when almost exhausted, I was revived by that precious beverage. I stood it three days and nights, but on the fourth completely broke down. I insensibly slipped down at full length in the bottom of the wagon; the night was cold and rainy; my companion covered me up to the eyes with straw, and I slept from the early part of the evening like a dead man. The horses were changed three times; the wagon was lifted up under me, and the wheels greased; and three times my companion quarrelled with the postmaster over my body without waking me. About six o'clock in the morning he roused me. I could not stir hand or foot; my mouth was full of dust and straw, and I felt a sense of suffocation. In a few moments I crawled out, staggered a few steps, and threw myself down on the floor of a wretched posthouse. My companion put my carpet-bag under my head, wrapped cloaks and greatcoats around me, and prepared me some tea; but I loathed everything. I was in that miserable condition which every traveller has some time experienced; my head ringing,

every bone aching, and perfectly reckless as to what became of me. While my companion stood over me I fell asleep, and believe I should have been sleeping there yet if he had not waked me. He said we must go on at all risks until we found a place where we could remain with some degree of comfort. I begged and entreated to be left to myself, but he was inexorable. He lifted me up, hauled me out to the kibitka, which was filled with fresh straw, and seated me within, supporting me on his shoulder.

It was a beautiful day. We moved moderately, and toward evening came to a posthouse kept by a Jew, or, rather, a Jewess, who was so kind and attentive that we determined to stay there all night. She brought in some clean straw and spread it on the floor, where I slept gloriously. My companion was tougher than I, but he could not stand the fleas and bugs, and about midnight went out and slept in the kibitka. In the morning we found that he had been too late; that the kibitka had been stripped of every article except himself and the straw. Fortunately, my carpet-bag had been brought in; but I received a severe blow in the loss of a cane, an old friend and travelling companion, which had been with me in every variety of scene, and which I had intended to carry home with me, and retain as a companion through life. It is almost inconceivable how much this little incident distressed me. It was a hundred times worse than the loss of my carpet-bag. I felt the want of it every moment; I had rattled it on the Boulevards of Paris, in the eternal city, the Colosseum, and the places thereabout; had carried it up the burning mountain, and poked it into the red-hot lava; had borne it in the Acropolis, on the

field of Marathon, and among the ruins of Ephesus ; had flourished it under the beard of the sultan, and the eyes and nose of the emperor and autocrat of all the Russias ; in deserts and in cities it had been my companion and friend. Unsparring Nemesis, let loose your vengeance upon the thief who stole it ! The rascals had even carried off the rope traces, and every loose article about the kibitka.

Notwithstanding this, however, I ought not to omit remarking the general security of travelling in Russia and Poland. The immense plains ; the distance of habitations ; the number of forests ; the custom of travelling by night as well as by day ; the negligence of all measures to ensure the safety of the roads, all contribute to favour robbery and murders ; and yet an instance of either is scarcely known in years. It was difficult on those immense levels, which seemed independent of either general or individual proprietors, to recognise even the bounds of empires. The Dwina, however, a natural boundary, rolls between Russia and Poland ; and at Vitepsk we entered the territories of what was once another kingdom. The surface of Poland forms part of that immense and unvaried plain which constitutes the northern portion of all the central European countries. A great portion of this plain is overspread with a deep layer of sand, alternating, however, with large clayey tracts and extensive marshes ; a winter nearly as severe as that of Sweden, and violent winds blowing uninterruptedly over this wide open region, are consequences of its physical structure and position. The Roman arms never penetrated any part of this great level tract, the whole of which was called by them Sarmatia ; and Sarmatia and Scythia

were in their descriptions always named together as the abode of nomadic and savage tribes. From the earliest era it appears to have been peopled by the Sclavonic tribes; a race widely diffused, and distinguished by a peculiar language, by a strong national feeling, and by a particular train of superstitious ideas. Though shepherds, they did not partake of the migratory character of the Teutonic or Tartar nations; and were long held in the most cruel bondage by the Huns, the Goths, and other nations of Asia, for whom their country was a path to the conquest of the west of Europe.

In the tenth century the Poles were a powerful and warlike nation. In the fourteenth Lithuania was incorporated with it, and Poland became one of the most powerful monarchies in Europe. For two centuries it was the bulwark of Christendom against the alarming invasions of the Turks; the reigns of Sigismund and Sobieski hold a high place in military history; and, until the beginning of the last century, its martial character gave it a commanding influence in Europe.

It is unnecessary to trace the rapid and irrecoverable fall of Poland. On the second partition, Kosciuszko, animated by his recent struggle for liberty in America, roused his countrymen to arms. But the feet of three giants were upon her breast; and Suwarrow, marching upon the capital, storming the fortress of Praga, and butchering in cold blood thirty thousand inhabitants, extinguished, apparently for ever, the rights and the glories of Poland. Living as we do apart from the rest of the world, with no national animosities transmitted by our fathers, it is impossible to realize the feeling of deadly hatred existing between neighbouring nations from the disputes of ancestors centuries ago. The history of Russia and Poland presents a continued series

of bloodstained pages. Battle after battle has nourished their mutual hate, and for a long time it had been the settled feeling of both that Russia or Poland must fall. It is perhaps fortunate for the rest of Europe that this feeling has always existed; for, if they were united in heart, the whole south of Europe would lie at the mercy of their invading armies. Napoleon committed a fatal error in tampering with the brave and patriotic Poles; for he might have rallied around him a nation of soldiers who, in gratitude, would have stood by him until they were exterminated.

But to return to Vitepsk. Here, for the first time, we fell into the memorable road traversed by Napoleon on his way to Moscow. The town stands on the banks of the Dwina, built on both sides of the river, and contains a population of about fifteen thousand, a great portion of whom are Jews. In itself, it has but little to engage the attention of the traveller; but I strolled through its streets with extraordinary interest, remembering it as the place where Napoleon decided on his fatal march to Moscow. It was at the same season and on the very same day of the year that the "grand army," having traversed the gloomy forests of Lithuania in pursuit of an invincible and intangible enemy, with the loss of more than a hundred thousand men, emerged from the last range of woods and halted at the presence of the hostile fires that covered the plain before the city. Napoleon slept in his tent on an eminence at the left of the main road, and before sunrise appeared at the advanced posts, and by its first rays saw the Russian army, eighty thousand strong, encamped on a high plain commanding all the avenues of the city. Ten thousand horsemen made a show of defending its passes; and at about ten o'clock, Murat le Beau Sabreur, intoxicated

by the admiration his presence excited, at the head of a single regiment of chasseurs charged the whole Russian cavalry. He was repulsed, and driven back to the foot of the hillock on which Napoleon stood. The chasseurs of the French guards formed a circle around him, drove off the assailant lancers, and the emperor ordered the attack to cease; and, pointing to the city, his parting words to Murat were, "To-morrow at five o'clock the sun of Austerlitz."

At daylight the camp of Barclay de Tolly was deserted; not a weapon, not a single valuable left behind; and a Russian soldier asleep under a bush was the sole result of the day expected to be so decisive. Vitepsk, except by a few miserable Jews and Jesuits, like the Russian camp, was also abandoned. The emperor mounted his horse and rode through the deserted camp and desolate streets of the city. Chagrined and mortified, he pitched his tents in an open courtyard; but, after a council of war with Murat, Eugene, and others of his principal officers, laid his sword upon the table, and resolved to finish in Vitepsk the campaign of that year. Well had it been for him had he never changed that determination. He traced his line of defence on the map, and explored Vitepsk and its environs as a place where he was likely to make a long residence; formed establishments of all kinds; erected large ovens capable of baking at once thirty thousand loaves of bread; pulled down a range of stone houses which injured the appearance of the square of the palace, and made arrangements for opening the theatre with Parisian actors. But in a few days he was observed to grow restless; the members of his household recollected his expression at the first view of the deserted Vi-

tepsk, "Do you think I have come so far to conquer these miserable huts?" Segur says that he was observed to wander about his apartments as if pursued by some dangerous temptation. Nothing could rivet his attention. Every moment he began, stopped, and resumed his labour. At length, overwhelmed with the importance of the considerations that agitated him, "he threw himself on the floor of his apartment; his frame, exhausted by the heat and the struggles of his mind, could only bear a covering of the slightest texture. He rose from his sleepless pillow possessed once more with the genius of war; his voice deepens, his eyes flash fire, and his countenance darkens. His attendants retreat from his presence, struck with mingled awe and respect. His plan is fixed, his determination taken, his order of march traced out."

The last council occupied eight hours. Berthier by a melancholy countenance, by lamentations, and even by tears; Lobau by the cold and haughty frankness of a warrior; Caulaincourt with obstinacy and impetuosity amounting to violence; Duroc by a chilling silence, and afterward by stern replies; and Daru straightforward and with firmness immovable, opposed his going; but, as if driven on by that fate he almost defied, he broke up the council with the fatal determination. "Blood has not been shed, and Russia is too great to yield without fighting. Alexander can only negotiate after a great battle. I will proceed to the holy city in search of that battle, and I will gain it. Peace waits me at the gates of Moscow." From that hour commenced that train of terrible disasters which finally drove him from the throne of France, and sent him to die an exile on a small island in the Indian

Ocean. I walked out on the Moscow road, by which the grand army, with pomp and martial music, with Murat, and Ney, and Duroc, and Daru, inspired by the great names of Smolensk and Moscow, plunged into a region of almost pathless forest, where most of them were destined to find a grave. I was at first surprised at the utter ignorance of the inhabitants of Vitepsk in regard to the circumstances attending the occupation of the city by Napoleon. A Jew was my cicerone, who talked of the great scenes of which this little city had in his own day been the theatre almost as matter of tradition, and without half the interest with which, even now, the Greek points the stranger to the ruins of Argos or the field of Marathon; and this ignorance in regard to the only matters that give an interest to this dreary road I remarked during the whole journey. I was so unsuccessful in my questions, and the answers were so unsatisfactory, that my companion soon became tired of acting as my interpreter. Indeed, as he said, he himself knew more than any one I met, for he had travelled it before in company with an uncle, of the Polish legion; but even he was by no means familiar with the ground.

We left Vitepsk with a set of miserable horses, rode all night, and at noon of the next day were approaching the banks of the Berezina, memorable for the dreadful passage which almost annihilated the wretched remnant of Napoleon's army. It was impossible, in passing over the same ground, not to recur to the events of which it had been the scene. The "invincible legions," which left Vitepsk two hundred thousand strong, were now fighting their dreadful retreat from Moscow through regulars and Cossacks, reduced to less than twelve

thousand men marching in column, with a train of thirty thousand undisciplined followers, sick, wounded, and marauders of every description. The cavalry which crossed the Niemen thirty-seven thousand in number was reduced to one hundred and fifty men on horseback. Napoleon collected all the officers who remained mounted, and formed them into a body, in all about five hundred, which he called his sacred squadron; officers served as privates, and generals of divisions as captains. He ordered the carriages of the officers, many of the wagons, and even the eagles belonging to the different corps, to be burned in his presence; and drawing his sword, with the stern remark that he had sufficiently acted the emperor, and must once more play the general, marched on foot at the head of his old guard. He had hardly reorganized before the immense pine forests which border the Berezina echoed with the thunder of the Russian artillery; in a moment all remains of discipline were lost. In the last stage of weakness and confusion they were roused by loud cries before them, and, to their great surprise and joy, recognised the armies of Victor and Oudinot. The latter knew nothing of the terrible disasters of the army of Moscow, and they were thrown into consternation and then melted to tears when they saw behind Napoleon, instead of the invincible legions which had left them in splendid equipments, a train of gaunt and spectral figures, their faces black with dirt, and long bristly beards, covered with rags, female pelisses, pieces of carpet, with bare and bleeding feet, or bundled with rags, and colonels and generals marching pellmell with soldiers, unarmed and shameless, without any order or discipline, kept together and sleeping round the same fires only by the instinct of self-preservation.

About noon we drove into the town of Borizoff. It stands on the banks of the Berezina, and is an old, irregular-looking place, with a heavy wooden church in the centre of an open square. As usual, at the door of the posthouse a group of Jews gathered around us. When Napoleon took possession of Borizoff the Jews were the only inhabitants who remained; and they, a scattered, wandering, and migratory people, without any attachment of soil or country, were ready to serve either the French or Russians, according to the inducements held out to them. A few noble instances are recorded where this persecuted and degraded people exhibited a devotion to the land that sheltered them honourable to their race and to the character of man; but in general they were false and faithless. Those who gathered around us in Borizoff looked as though they might be the very people who betrayed the Russians. One of them told us that a great battle had been fought there, but we could not find any who had been present at the fatal passage of the river. We dined at the posthouse, probably with less anxiety than was felt by Napoleon or any of the flying Frenchmen; but even we were not permitted to eat in peace; for, before we had finished, our vehicle was ready, with worse horses than usual, and a surlier postillion. We sent the postillion on ahead, and walked down to the bank of the river. On the night preceding the passage, Napoleon himself had command of Borizoff, with six thousand guards prepared for a desperate contest. He passed the whole night on his feet; and while waiting for the approach of daylight in one of the houses on the border of the river, so impracticable seemed the chance of crossing with the army, that Murat proposed to him to put himself under the

escort of some brave and determined Poles, and save himself while there was yet time ; but the emperor indignantly rejected the proposition as a cowardly flight. The river is here very broad, and divided into branches. On the opposite side are the remains of an embankment that formed part of the Russian fortifications. When the Russians were driven out of Borizoff by Oudinot, they crossed the river, burned the bridge, and erected these embankments.

Besides the sanguinary contest of the French and Russians, this river is also memorable for a great battle between my companion and our postillion. In the middle of the bridge the postillion stopped and waited till we came up ; he grumbled loudly at being detained, to which my companion replied in his usual conciliatory and insinuating manner, by laying his cane over the fellow's shoulders ; but on the bridge of Borizoff the blood of the Lithuanian was roused ; and, perhaps, urged on by the memory of the deeds done there by his fathers, he sprang out of the wagon, and with a warcry that would not have disgraced a Cossack of the Don, rushed furiously upon my friend. Oh for a Homer to celebrate that fight on the bridge of Borizoff ! The warriors met, not like Grecian heroes, with spear and shield, and clad in steel, but with their naked fists and faces bare to take the blows. My friend was a sublime spectacle. Like a rock, firm and immoveable, he stood and met the charge of the postillion ; in short, in the twinkling of an eye he knocked the postillion down. Those who know say that it is more trying to walk over a field of battle after all is over than to be in the fight ; and I believe it from my experience in our trying passage of the Berezina ; for, when I picked up the dis-

- comfited postillion, whose face was covered with blood, I believe that I had the worst of it. All great victories are tested by their results, and nothing could be more decisive than that over the postillion. He arose a wiser and much more tractable man. At first he looked very stupid when he saw me leaning over him, and very startled when he rubbed his hand over his face and saw it stained with blood; but, raising himself, he caught sight of his victor, and without a word got into the wagon, walked the horses over the bridge, and at the other end got out and threw himself on the ground.

It was a beautiful afternoon, and we lingered on the bridge. Crossing it, we walked up the bank on the opposite side toward the place where Napoleon erected his bridges for the passage of his army. All night the French worked at the bridges by the light of the enemy's fires on the opposite side. At daylight the fires were abandoned, and the Russians, supposing the attempt here to be a feint, were seen in full retreat. The emperor, impatient to get possession of the opposite bank, pointed it out to the bravest. A French aide-camp and Lithuanian count threw themselves into the river, and, in spite of the ice, which cut their horses' breasts, reached the opposite bank in safety. About one o'clock the bank on which we stood was entirely cleared of Cossacks, and the bridge for the infantry was finished. The first division crossed it rapidly with its cannon, the men shouting "*Vive l'empereur!*" The passage occupied three days. The number of stragglers and the quantity of baggage were immense. On the night of the twenty-seventh the stragglers left the bridge, tore down the whole village, and made fires with the materials, around which they crouched their shivering

figures, and from which it was impossible to tear themselves away. At daylight they were roused by the report of Witgenstein's cannon thundering over their heads, and again all rushed tumultuously to the bridges. The Russians, with Platow and his Cossacks, were now in full communication on both sides of the river. On the left bank, Napoleon's own presence of mind and the bravery of his soldiers gave him a decided superiority; but, in the language of Scott, the scene on the right bank had become the wildest and most horrible which war can exhibit.

"Victor, with eight or ten thousand men, covered the retreat over the bridges, while behind his line thousands of stragglers, old men, women, and children, were wandering by the side of this river like the fabled spectres which throng the banks of the infernal Styx, seeking in vain for passage. The balls of the Russians began to fall among the disordered mass, and the whole body rushed like distracted beings toward the bridges, every feeling of prudence or humanity swallowed up by the animal instinct of self-preservation. The weak and helpless either shrunk from the fray and sat down to wait their fate at a distance, or, mixing in it, were thrust over the bridges, crushed under carriages, cut down with sabres, or trampled to death under the feet of their countrymen. All this while the action continued with fury; and, as if the heavens meant to match their wrath with that of man, a hurricane arose and added terrors to a scene which was already of a character so dreadful. About midday the larger bridge, constructed for artillery and heavy carriages, broke down, and multitudes were forced into the water. The scream of the despairing multitude became at this crisis for a moment so univer-

sal, that it rose shrilly above the wild whistling of the tempest and the sustained and redoubled hurrahs of the Cossacks. The dreadful scene continued till dark. As the obscurity came on, Victor abandoned the station he had defended so bravely, and led the remnant of his troops in their turn across. All night the miscellaneous multitude continued to throng across the bridge under the fire of the Russian artillery. At daybreak the French engineers finally set fire to the bridge, and all that remained on the other side, including many prisoners, and a great quantity of guns and baggage, became the property of the Russians. The amount of the French loss was never exactly known; but the Russian report concerning the bodies of the invaders, which were collected and burned as soon as the thaw permitted, states that upward of thirty-six thousand were found in the Berezina."

The whole of this scene was familiar to me as matter of history; the passage of the Berezina had in some way fastened itself upon my mind as one of the most fearful scenes in the annals of war; and, besides this, at St. Petersburg the colonel and prince had given me a detailed account of the horrors of that dreadful night, for they were both with Witgenstein's army, by the light of the snow, the course of the river, and the noise, directing a murderous fire of artillery against the dark mass moving over the bridge; and nearer still, my companion had visited the place in company with his uncle, of the Polish legion, and repeated to me the circumstances of individual horror which he had heard from his relative, surpassing human belief. The reader will excuse me if I have lingered too long on the banks of that river; and perhaps, too, he will excuse me when I

tell him that, before leaving it, I walked down to its brink and bathed my face in its waters. Others have done so at the classic streams of Italy and Greece ; but I rolled over the Arno and the Tiber in a vetturino without stopping, and the reader will remember that I jumped over the Ilissus.

CHAPTER X.

Travel by Night.—A Rencontre.—A Traveller's Message.—Lithuania.—Poverty of the Country.—Agricultural Implements.—Minsk.—Polish Jews.—A Coin of Freedom.—Riding in a Basket.—Brezc.—The Bug.—A searching Operation.—Women Labourers.—Warsaw.

It was after dark when we returned to our wagon, still standing at the end of the bridge opposite Borizoff. Our postillion, like a sensible man, had lain down to sleep at the head of his horses, so they could not move without treading on him and waking him ; and, when we roused him, the pain of his beating was over, and with it all sense of the indignity ; and, in fact, we made him very grateful for the flogging by promising him a few additional kopeks.

We hauled up the straw and seated ourselves in the bottom of our kibitka. Night closed upon us amid the gloomy forests bordering the banks of the Berezina. We talked for a little while, and by degrees drawing our cloaks around us, each fell into a reverie. The continued tinkling of the bell, which, on my first entering Russia, grated on my ear, had become agreeable to me, and in a dark night particularly was a pleasing sound. The song of the postillion, too, harmonized with the repose of spirit at that moment most grateful to us ; that

too died away, the bell almost ceased its tinkling, and, in spite of the alarum of war which we had all day been ringing in our own ears, we should probably soon have fallen into a sleep as sound, for a little while at least, as that of them who slept under the waters of the Berezina, but we were suddenly roused by a shock as alarming to quiet travellers as the hourra of the Cossack in the ears of the flying Frenchmen. Our horses sprang out of the road, but not in time to avoid a concussion with another wagon going toward Borizoff. Both postillions were thrown off their seats; and the stranger, picking himself up, came at us with a stream of Lithuanian Russian almost harsh enough to frighten the horses. I will not suggest what its effect was upon us, but only that, as to myself, it seemed at first equal to the voice of at least a dozen freebooters and marauders; and if the English of it had been "stand and deliver," I should probably have given up my carpet-bag without asking to reserve a change of linen. But I was restored by the return fire of our postillion, who drowned completely the attack of his adversary by his outrageous clamour; and when he stopped to take breath my companion followed up the defence, and this brought out a fourth voice from the bottom of the opposite wagon. A truce was called, and waiving the question on which side the fault lay, we all got out to ascertain the damage. Our antagonist passenger was a German merchant, used to roughing it twice every year between Berlin, Warsaw, Petersburg, and Moscow, and took our smashing together at night in this desolate forest as coolly as a rub of the shoulders in the streets; and, when satisfied that his wagon was not injured, kindly asked us if we had any bones broken. We returned

his kind inquiries ; and, after farther interchanges of politeness, he said that he was happy to make our acquaintance, and invited us to come and see him at Berlin. We wanted him to go back and let us have a look at him by torchlight, but he declined ; and, after feeling him stretched out in his bed in the bottom of his wagon, we started him on his way.

We resumed our own places, and, without dozing again, arrived at the posthouse, where first of all we made ourselves agreeable to the postmaster by delivering our German friend's message to him, that he ought to be whipped and condemned to live where he was till he was a hundred years old for putting the neck of a traveller at the mercy of a sleepy postillion ; but the postmaster was a Jew, and thought the vile place where he lived equal to any on earth. He was a miserable, squalid-looking object, with a pine torch in his hand lighting up the poverty and filthiness of his wretched habitation, and confessed that he should be too happy to enjoy the fortune which the German would have entailed upon him as a curse. He offered to make us a bed of some dirty straw which had often been slept on before ; but we shrank from it ; and, as soon as we could get horses, returned to our kibitka and resumed our journey.

The whole province of Lithuania is much the same in appearance. We lost nothing by travelling through it at night ; indeed, every step that we advanced was a decided gain, as it brought us so much nearer its farthest border. The vast provinces of Lithuania, formerly a part of the kingdom of Poland, and, since the partition of that unhappy country, subject to the throne of Russia, until the fourteenth century were in-

dependent of either. The Lithuanians and Samogitians are supposed to be of a different race from the Poles, and spoke a language widely dissimilar to the Polish or Russian. Their religion was a strange idolatry; they worshipped the god of thunder, and paid homage to a god of the harvest; they maintained priests, who were constantly feeding a sacred fire in honour of the god of the seasons; they worshipped trees, fountains, and plants; had sacred serpents, and believed in guardian spirits of trees, cattle, &c. Their government, like that of all other barbarous nations, was despotic, and the nobles were less numerous and more tyrannical than in Poland. In the latter part of the fourteenth century, on the death of Louis, successor to Casimir the Great, Hedwiga was called to the throne of Poland, under a stipulation, however, that she should follow the will of the Poles in the choice of her husband. Many candidates offered themselves for the hand dowered with a kingdom; but the offers of Jagellon, duke of Lithuania, were most tempting; he promised to unite his extensive dominions to the territory of Poland, and pledged himself for the conversion to Christianity of his Lithuanian subjects. But queens are not free from the infirmities of human nature; and Hedwiga had fixed her affections upon her cousin, William of Austria, whom she had invited into Poland; and when Jagellon came to take possession of his wife and crown, she refused to see him. The nobles, however, sent William back to his papa, and locked her up as if she had been a boarding-school miss. And again, queens are not free from the infirmities of human nature: Hedwiga was inconstant; the handsome Lithuanian made her forget her first love, and Poland and

Lithuania were united under one crown. Jagellon was baptized, but the inhabitants of Lithuania did not so readily embrace the Christian religion; in one of the provinces they clung for a long time to their own strange and wild superstitions; and even in modern times, it is said, the peasants long obstinately refused to use ploughs or other agricultural instruments furnished with iron, for fear of wounding the bosom of mother earth.

All the way from Borizoff the road passes through a country but little cultivated, dreary, and covered with forests. When Napoleon entered the province of Lithuania his first bulletins proclaimed, "Here, then, is that Russia so formidable at a distance! It is a desert for which its scattered population is wholly insufficient. They will be vanquished by the very extent of territory which ought to defend them;" and, before I had travelled in it a day, I could appreciate the feeling of the soldier from La Belle France, who, hearing his Polish comrades boast of their country, exclaimed, "*Et ces gueux la appellent cette pays une patrie!*"

The villages are a miserable collection of straggling huts, without plan or arrangement, and separated from each other by large spaces of ground. They are about ten or twelve feet square, made of the misshapen trunks of trees heaped on each other, with the ends projecting over; the roof of large shapeless boards, and the window a small hole in the wall, answering the double purpose of admitting light and letting out smoke. The tenants of these wretched hovels exhibit the same miserable appearance both in person and manners. They are hard-boned and sallow-complexioned; the men wear coarse white woollen frocks, and a round felt cap lined

with wool, and shoes made of the bark of trees, and their uncombed hair hangs low over their heads, generally of a flaxen colour. Their agricultural implements are of the rudest kind. The plough and harrow are made from the branches of the fir tree, without either iron or ropes; their carts are put together without iron, consisting of four small wheels, each of a single piece of wood; the sides are made of the bark of a tree bent round, and the shafts are a couple of fir branches; their bridles and traces platted from the bark of trees, or composed merely of twisted branches. Their only instrument to construct their huts and make their carts is a hatchet. They were servile and cringing in their expressions of respect, bowing down to the ground and stopping their carts as soon as we came near them, and stood with their caps in their hands till we were out of sight. The whole country, except in some open places around villages, is one immense forest of firs, perhaps sixty feet in height, compact and thick, but very slender. As we approached Minsk the road was sandy, and we entered by a wooden bridge over a small stream and along an avenue of trees.

Minsk is one of the better class of Lithuanian towns, being the chief town of the government of Minsk, but very dirty and irregular. The principal street terminates in a large open square of grass and mean wooden huts. From this another street goes off at right angles, containing large houses, and joining with a second square, where some of the principal buildings are of brick. From this square several streets branch off, and enter a crowd of wooden hovels irregularly huddled together, and covering a large space of ground. The churches are heavily constructed, and in a style pecu-

liar to Lithuania, their gable ends fronting the street, and terminated at each corner by a square spire, with a low dome between them. The population is half Catholic and half Jewish, and the Jews are of the most filthy and abject class.

A few words with regard to the Jews in Poland. From the moment of crossing the borders of Lithuania, I had remarked in every town and village swarms of people differing entirely from the other inhabitants in physical appearance and costume, and in whose sharply-drawn features, long beards, and flowing dresses, with the coal-black eyes and oriental costumes of the women, I at once recognised the dispersed and wandering children of Israel. On the second destruction of Jerusalem, when the Roman general drove a plough over the site of the Temple of Solomon, the political existence of the Jewish nation was annihilated, their land was portioned out among strangers, and the descendants of Abraham were forbidden to pollute with their presence the holy city of their fathers. In the Roman territories, their petition for the reduction of taxation received the stern answer of the Roman, "Ye demand exemption from tribute for your soil; I will lay it on the air you breathe;" and, in the words of the historian, "Dispersed and vagabond, exiled from their native soil and air, they wander over the face of the earth without a king, either human or divine, and even as strangers they are not permitted to salute with their footsteps their native land." History furnishes no precise records of the emigration or of the first settlement of the Israelites in the different countries of Europe; but for centuries they have been found dispersed, as it was foretold they would be, over the whole habitable

world, a strange, unsocial, and isolated people, a living and continued miracle. At this day they are found in all the civilized countries of Europe and America, in the wildest regions of Asia and Africa, and even within the walls of China ; but, after Palestine, Poland is regarded as their Land of Promise ; and there they present a more extraordinary spectacle than in any country where their race is known. Centuries have rolled on, revolutions have convulsed the globe, new and strange opinions have disturbed the human race, but the Polish Jew remains unchanged : the same as the dark superstition of the middle ages made him ; the same in his outward appearance and internal dispositions, in his physical and moral condition, as when he fled thither for refuge from the swords of the crusaders.

As early as the fourteenth century, great privileges were secured to the Jews by Casimir the Great, who styled them his "faithful and able subjects," induced, according to the chronicles of the times, like Ahasuerus of old, by the love of a beautiful Esther. While in Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and even in England and France, their whole history is that of one continued persecution, oppressed by the nobles, anathematized by the clergy, despised and abhorred by the populace, flying from city to city, arrested, and tortured, and burned alive, and sometimes destroying themselves by thousands to escape horrors worse than death ; while all orders were arrayed in fierce and implacable hatred against them, in Poland the race of Israel found rest ; and there they remain at this day, after centuries of residence, still a distinct people, strangers and sojourners in the land, mingling with their neighbours in the every-

day business of life, but never mingling their blood; the direct descendants of the Israelites who, three thousand years ago, went out from the land of Egypt; speaking the same language, and practising the laws delivered to Moses on the mountain of Sinai; mourning over their fallen temple, and still looking for the Messiah who shall bring together their scattered nation and restore their temporal kingdom.

But notwithstanding the interest of their history and position, the Polish Jews are far from being an interesting people; they swarm about the villages and towns, intent on gain, and monopolizing all the petty traffic of the country. Outward degradation has worked inward upon their minds; confined to base and sordid occupations, their thoughts and feelings are contracted to their stations, and the despised have become despicable. It was principally in his capacity of innkeeper that I became acquainted with the Polish Jew. The inn is generally a miserable hovel communicating with, or a room partitioned off in one corner of, a large shed serving as a stable and yard for vehicles; the entrance is under a low porch of timber; the floor is of dirt; the furniture consists of a long table, or two or three small ones, and in one corner a bunch of straw, or sometimes a few raised boards formed into a platform, with straw spread over it, for beds; at one end a narrow door leads into a sort of hole filled with dirty beds, old women, half-grown boys and girls, and children not overburdened with garments, and so filthy that, however fatigued, I never felt disposed to venture among them for rest. Here the Jew, assisted by a dirty-faced Rachel, with a keen and anxious look, passes his whole day in serving out to the meanest customers beer, and hay, and corn; wran-

gling with and extorting money from intoxicated peasants ; and, it is said, sometimes, after the day's drudgery is over, retires at night to his miserable hole to pore over the ponderous volumes filled with rabbinical lore ; or sometimes his mind takes a higher flight, meditating upon the nature of the human soul ; its relation to the Divinity ; the connexion between the spirit and the body ; and indulging in the visionary hope of gaining, by means of cabalistic formula, command over the spirits of the air, the fire, the flood, and the earth.

Though the days of bitter persecution and hatred have gone by, the Jews are still objects of contempt and loathing. Once I remember pointing out to my postillion a beautiful Jewish girl, and, with the fanatic spirit of the middle ages, himself one of the most degraded serfs in Poland, he scorned the idea of marrying the fair daughter of Israel. But this the Jew does not regard ; all he asks is to be secured from the active enmity of mankind. " Like the haughty Roman banished from the world, the Israelite throws back the sentence of banishment, and still retreats to the lofty conviction that his race is not excluded as an unworthy, but kept apart as a sacred, people ; humiliated, indeed, but still hallowed, and reserved for the sure though tardy fulfilment of the Divine promises."

The Jews in Poland are still excluded from all offices and honours, and from all the privileges and distinctions of social life. Until the accession of Nicolas, they were exempted from military service on payment of a tax ; but since his time they have been subject to the regular conscription. They regard this as an alarming act of oppression, for the boys are taken from their families at twelve or thirteen, and sent to the army or the com-

mon military school, where they imbibe notions utterly at variance with the principles taught them by their fathers ; and, probably, if the system continues, another generation will work a great change in the character of the Jews of Poland.

But to return to the Jews at Minsk. As usual, they gathered around us before we were out of our kibitka, laid hold of our baggage, and in Hebrew, Lithuanian, and Polish, were clamorous in offers of service. They were spare in figure, dressed in high fur caps and long black muslin gowns, shining and glossy from long use, and tied around the waist with a sash ; and here I remarked what has often been remarked by other travellers, when the features were at rest, a style of face and expression resembling the pictures of the Saviour in the galleries in Italy. While my companion was arranging for posthorses and dinner, I strolled through the town alone, that is, with a dozen Israelites at my heels ; and on my return I found an accession of the stiff-necked and unbelieving race, one of whom arrested my attention by thrusting before me a silver coin. It was not an antique, but it had in my eyes a greater value than if it had been dug from the ruins of a buried city, and bore the image of Julius Cæsar. On the breaking out of the late revolution, one of the first acts of sovereignty exercised by the provincial government was to issue a national coin stamped with the arms of the old kingdom of Poland, the white eagle and the armed cavalier, with an inscription around the rim, "God protect Poland." When the revolution was crushed, with the view of destroying in the minds of the Poles every memento of their brief but glorious moment of liberty, this coin was called in and suppressed, and another sub-

stituted in its place, with the Polish eagle, by way of insult, stamped in a small character near the tip end of the wing of the double-headed eagle of Russia. The coin offered me by the Jew was one of the emission of the revolution, and my companion told me it was a rare thing to find one. I bought it at the Jew's price, and put it in my pocket as a memorial of a brave and fallen people.

I will not inflict upon the reader the particulars of our journey through this dreary and uninteresting country. We travelled constantly, except when we were detained for horses. We never stopped at night, for there seldom was any shelter on the road better than the Jews' inns, and even in our kibitka we were better than there. But, unluckily, on the seventh day, our kibitka broke down; the off hind wheel snapped in pieces, and let us down rather suddenly in one of the autocrat's forests. Our first impulse was to congratulate ourselves that this accident happened in daylight; and we had a narrow escape, for the sun had hardly begun to find its way into the dark forest. Fortunately, too, we were but two or three versts from a posthouse. I had met with such accidents at home, and rigged a small tree (there being no such things as rails, property there not being divided by rail fences) under the hind axle, supporting it on the front. We lighted our pipes and escorted our crippled vehicle to the posthouse, where we bought a wheel off another wagon, much better than the old one, only about two inches lower. This, however, was not so bad as might be supposed, at least for me, who sat on the upper side, and had the stout figure of my companion as a leaning-post.

At Sloghan, about two hundred versts from Brezc,

the frontier town of Poland, we sold our kибитка for a breakfast, and took the *char de pôte*, or regular troika. This is the postboy's favourite vehicle; the body being made of twigs interlaced like a long basket, without a particle of iron, and so light that a man can lift up either end with one hand. Our speed was increased wonderfully by the change; the horses fairly played with the little car at their heels; the drivers vied with each other, and several posts in succession we made nearly twenty versts in an hour. It will probably be difficult to throw the charm of romance around the troika driver; but he comes from the flower of the peasantry; his life, passed on the wild highways, is not without its vicissitudes, and he is made the hero of the Russian's favourite popular ballads:

"Away, away, along the road
The gallant troika bounds;
While 'neath the douga, sadly sweet,
Their Valdai bell resounds."*

We passed the house of a *very respectable* seigneur who had married his own sister. We stopped at his village and talked of him with the postmaster, by whom he was considered a model of the domestic virtues. The same day we passed the chateau of a nobleman who wrote himself cousin to the Emperors of Russia and Austria, confiscated for the part he took in the late Polish revolution, a melancholy-looking object, deserted and falling to ruins, its owner wandering in exile with a price upon his head. It rained hard during the day, for the first time since we left Petersburg; at night the rain ceased, but the sky was still overcast. For a long

* The douga is the bow over the neck of the middle horse, to which the bell is attached; and Valdai the place on the Moscow road where the best bells are made.

distance, and, in fact, a great part of the way from Petersburg, the road was bordered with trees. At eleven o'clock we stopped at a wretched posthouse, boiled water, and refreshed ourselves with deep potations of hot tea. We mounted our troika, the postillion shouted, and set off on a run. Heavy clouds were hanging in the sky; it was so dark that we could not see the horses, and there was some little danger of a breakdown; but there was a high and wild excitement in hurrying swiftly through the darkness on a run, hearing the quick tinkling of the bell and the regular fall of the horses' hoofs, and seeing only the dark outline of the trees. We continued *this* way all night, and toward morning we were rattling on a full gallop through the streets of Brezc. We drove into a large stable-yard filled with kibitkas, troikas, and all kinds of Russian vehicles, at one end of which was a long low building kept by a Jew. We dismounted, and so ended nearly three thousand miles of posting in Russia. The Jew, roused by our noise, was already at the door with a lighted taper in his hand, and gave us a room with a leather-covered sofa and a leather cushion for a pillow, where we slept till eleven o'clock the next day.

We breakfasted, and in the midst of a violent rain crossed the Bug, and entered the territory of Poland Proper. For many centuries the banks of the Bug have been the battle-ground of the Russians and Poles. In the time of Boleslaus the Terrible, the Russians were defeated there with great slaughter, and the river was so stained with blood that it has retained ever since the name of the *Horrid*. Before crossing we were obliged to exchange our Russian money for Polish, rubles for florins, losing, of course, heavily by the operation, besides being subjected to the bore of studying a new cur-

rency ; and the moment we planted our feet on the conquered territory, though now nominally under the same government, we were obliged to submit to a most vexatious process. The custom-house stood at the end of the bridge, and, as matter of course, our postillion stopped there. Our luggage was taken off the wagon, carried inside, every article taken out and laid on the floor, and a Russian soldier stood over, comparing them with a list of prohibited articles as long as my arm. Fortunately for me, the Russian government had not prohibited travellers from wearing pantaloons and shirts in Poland, though it came near faring hard with a morning-gown. My companion, however, suffered terribly ; his wearing apparel was all laid out on one side, while a large collection of curious and pretty nothings, which he had got together with great affection at the capital, as memorials for his friends at home, were laid out separately, boxes opened, papers unrolled, and, with provoking deliberation, examined according to the list of prohibited things. It was a new and despotic regulation unknown to him, and he looked on in agony, every condemned article being just the one above all others which he would have saved ; and when they had finished, a large pile was retained for the examination of another officer, to be sent on to Warsaw in case of their being allowed to pass at all. I had frequently regretted having allowed the trouble and inconvenience to prevent my picking up curiosities ; but when I saw the treasures of my friend taken from him, or, at least, detained for an uncertain time, I congratulated myself upon my good fortune. My friend was a man not easily disheartened ; he had even got over the loss of his love at St. Petersburg ; but he would rather have been turned

adrift in Poland without his pantaloons than be stripped of his precious bawbles. I had seen him roused several times on the road, quarrelling with postmasters and thumping postillions, but I had never before seen the full development of that extraordinary head of hair. He ground his teeth and cursed the whole Russian nation, from the Emperor Nicolas down to the soldier at the custom-house. He was ripe for revolution, and, if a new standard of rebellion had been set up in Poland, he would have hurried to range himself under its folds. I soothed him by striking the key-note of his heart. All the way from Petersburg he had sat mechanically, with his pocket-glass and brush, dressing his mustaches; but his heart was not in the work, until, as we approached the borders of Poland, he began to recover from his Petersburg affair, and to talk of the beauty of the Polish women. I turned him to this now.

It is a fact that, while for ages a deadly hatred has existed between the Russians and the Poles, and while the Russians are at this day lording it over the Poles with the most arbitrary insolence and tyranny, beauty still asserts its lawful supremacy, and the Polish women bring to their feet the conquerors of their fathers, and husbands, and brothers. The first posthouse at which we stopped confirmed all that my companion had said; for the postmaster's daughter was brilliantly beautiful, particularly in the melting wildness of a dark eye, indicating an Asiatic or Tartar origin; and her gentle influence was exerted in soothing the savage humour of my friend, for she sympathized in his misfortunes, and the more sincerely when she heard of the combs, and rings, and slippers, and other pretty little ornaments for sisters and female friends at home; and my Pole could not resist the sympathy of a pretty woman.

We had scarcely left the postmaster's daughter, on the threshold of Poland, almost throwing a romance about the Polish women, before I saw the most degrading spectacle I ever beheld in Europe, or even in the barbarous countries of the East. Forty or fifty women were at work in the fields, and a large, well-dressed man, with a pipe in his mouth and a long stick in his hand, was walking among them as overseer. In our country the most common labouring man would revolt at the idea of his wife or daughter working in the open fields. I had seen it, however, in gallant France and beautiful Italy; but I never saw, even in the barbarous countries of the East, so degrading a spectacle as this; and I could have borne it almost anywhere better than in chivalric Poland.

We were now in the territory called Poland Proper; that is, in that part which, after the other provinces had been wrested away and attached to the dominions of the colossal powers around, until the revolution and conquest of 1830 had retained the cherished name of the kingdom of Poland. The whole road is Macadamized, smooth and level as a floor, from the banks of the Bug to Warsaw; the posthouses and postmasters are much better, and posting is better regulated, though more expensive. The road lay through that rich agricultural district which had for ages made Poland celebrated as the granary of Europe; and though the face of the country was perfectly flat, and the scenery tame and uninteresting, the soil was rich, and, at that time, in many places teeming with heavy crops. As yet, it had not recovered from the desolating effects of the war of the revolution. The whole road has been a battle-ground, over which the Poles had chased the Russians to the frontier, and been driven

back to Warsaw ; time after time it had been drenched with Russian and Polish blood, the houses and villages sacked and burned, and their blackened ruins still cumbered the ground, nursing in the conquered but unsubdued Pole his deep, undying hatred of the Russians.

On this road Diebitsch, the crosser of the Balkan, at the head of eighty thousand men, advanced to Warsaw. His right and left wings manœuvred to join him at Siedler, the principal town, through which we passed. We changed horses three times, and rolled on all night without stopping. In the morning my companion pointed out an old oak, where a distinguished colonel of the revolution, drawing up the fourth Polish regiment against the Imperial Guards, with a feeling of mortal hate commanded them to throw away their primings, and charge with the bayonet, "*Cœur à cœur*." In another place five hundred gentlemen, dressed in black, with pumps, silk stockings, and small swords, in a perfect wantonness of pleasure at fighting with the Russians, and, as they said, in the same spirit with which they would go to a ball, threw themselves upon a body of the guards, and, after the most desperate fighting, were cut to pieces to a man. Farther on, a little off from the road, on the borders of the field of Grokow, was a large mound covered with black crosses, thrown up over the graves of the Poles who had fallen there. About eleven o'clock we approached the banks of the Vistula. We passed the suburbs of Praga, the last battle-ground of Kosciusko, where the bloodstained Suwarrow butchered in cold blood thirty thousand Poles. Warsaw lay spread out on the opposite bank of the river, the heroic but fallen capital of Poland, the city of brave men and beautiful women ; of Stanislaus, and So-

bieski, and Poniatowsky, and Kosciusko, and, I will not withhold it, possessing, in my eyes, a romantic interest from its associations with the hero of my school-boy days, Thaddeus of Warsaw. On the right is the chateau of the old Kings of Poland, now occupied by a Russian viceroy, with the banner of Russia waving over its walls. We rode over the bridge and entered the city. Martial music was sounding, and Russian soldiers, Cossacks, and Circassians were filing through its streets. We held up to let them pass, and they moved like the keepers of a conquered city, with bent brows and stern faces, while the citizens looked at them in gloomy silence. We drove up to the Hotel de Leipzig (which, however, I do not recommend), where I took a bath and a doctor.

CHAPTER XI.

Warsaw.—A Polish Doctor.—Battle of Gorkow.—The Outbreak.—The fatal Issue.—Present Condition of Poland.—Polish Exiles.—Aspect of Warsaw.—Traits of the Poles.

A LETTER dated at Warsaw to my friends at home begins thus: "I have reached this place to be put on my back by a Polish doctor. How long he will keep me here I do not know. He promises to set me going again in a week; and, as he has plenty of patients without keeping me down, I have great confidence in him. Besides, having weathered a Greek, an Armenian, and a Russian, I think I shall be too much for a Pole." There was not a servant in the house who understood

any language I spoke, and my friend kindly proposed my taking a room with him; and, as he had many acquaintances in Warsaw, who thronged to see him, he had to tell them all the history of the American in the bed in one corner. All the next day I lay in the room alone on a low bedstead, looking up at the ceiling and counting the cracks in the wall. I was saved from a fit of the blues by falling into a passion, and throwing my boots at the servant because he could not understand me. Late in the evening my friend returned from the theatre with three or four companions, and we made a night of it, I taking medicine and they smoking pipes. They were all excellent fellows, and, as soon as they heard me moving, came over to me, and, when I fell back on my pillow, covered me up, and went back, and talked till I wanted them again. Toward day light I fell asleep, and, when the doctor came in the morning, felt myself a new man. My doctor, by-the-way, was not a Pole, but a German, physician to the court, and the first in Warsaw; he occupied a little country-seat a few miles from Warsaw, belonging to Count Niemcewicz, the poet and patriot, who accompanied Kosciusko to this country, and married a lady of New-Jersey; returned with him to Poland, was with him on his last battle-field, and almost cut to pieces by his side.

In the afternoon one of my companions of the night before came to see me. He had been in Warsaw during the revolution, and talked with enthusiasm of their brief but gallant struggle; and, as it was a beautiful afternoon, proposed strolling to a little eminence near at hand, commanding a view of the first battle-ground. I went with him, and he pointed out on the other side

of the Vistula the field of Grokow. Below it was the bridge over which General Romarinocarried his little army during the night, having covered the bridge, the horses' hoofs, and the wheels of the carriages with straw. This general is now in France under sentence of death, with a price set upon his head.

The battle of Grokow, the greatest in Europe since that of Waterloo, was fought on the twenty-fifth of February, 1831, and the place where I stood commanded a view of the whole ground. The Russian army was under the command of Diebitsch, and consisted of one hundred and forty-two thousand infantry, forty thousand cavalry, and three hundred and twelve pieces of cannon. This enormous force was arranged in two lines of combatants, and a third of reserve. Its left wing, between Wavre and the marshes of the Vistula, consisted of four divisions of infantry of forty-seven thousand men, three of cavalry of ten thousand five hundred, and one hundred and eight pieces of cannon; the right consisted of three and a half divisions of infantry of thirty-one thousand men, four divisions of cavalry of fifteen thousand seven hundred and fifty men, and fifty-two pieces of cannon. Upon the borders of the great forest opposite the Forest of Elders, conspicuous from where I stood, was placed the reserve, commanded by the Grand-duke Constantine. Against this immense army the Poles opposed less than fifty thousand men and a hundred pieces of cannon, under the command of General Skrzynecki.

At break of day the whole force of the Russian right wing, with a terrible fire of fifty pieces of artillery and columns of infantry, charged the Polish left with the determination of carrying it by a single and overpower-

ing effort. The Poles, with six thousand five hundred men and twelve pieces of artillery, not yielding a foot of ground, and knowing they could hope for no succour, resisted this attack for several hours, until the Russians slackened their fire. About ten o'clock the plain was suddenly covered with the Russian forces issuing from the cover of the forest, seeming one undivided mass of troops. Two hundred pieces of cannon, posted on a single line, commenced a fire which made the earth tremble, and was more terrible than the oldest officers, many of whom had fought at Marengo and Austerlitz, had ever beheld. The Russians now made an attack upon the right wing; but foiled in this as upon the left, Diebitsch directed the strength of his army against the Forest of Elders, hoping to divide the Poles into two parts. One hundred and twenty pieces of cannon were brought to bear on this one point, and fifty battalions, incessantly pushed to the attack, kept up a scene of massacre unheard of in the annals of war. A Polish officer who was in the battle told me that the small streams which intersected the forest were so choked with dead that the infantry marched directly over their bodies. The heroic Poles, with twelve battalions, for four hours defended the forest against the tremendous attack. Nine times they were driven out, and nine times, by a series of admirably-executed manœuvres, they repulsed the Russians with immense loss. Batteries, now concentrated in one point, were in a moment hurried to another, and the artillery advanced to the charge like cavalry, sometimes within a hundred feet of the enemy's columns, and there opened a murderous fire of grape.

At three o'clock the generals, many of whom were

wounded, and most of whom had their horses shot under them, and fought on foot at the head of their divisions, resolved upon a retrograde movement, so as to draw the Russians on the open plain. Diebitsch, supposing it to be a flight, looked over to the city and exclaimed, "Well, then, it appears that, after this bloody day, I shall take tea in the Belvidere Palace." The Russian troops debouched from the forest. A cloud of Russian cavalry, with several regiments of heavy cuirassiers at their head, advanced to the attack. Colonel Pientka, who had kept up an unremitting fire from his battery for five hours, seated with perfect sangfroid upon a disabled piece of cannon, remained to give another effective fire; then left at full gallop a post which he had so long occupied under the terrible fire of the enemy's artillery. This rapid movement of his battery animated the Russian forces. The cavalry advanced on a trot upon the line of a battery of rockets. A terrible discharge was poured into their ranks, and the horses, galled to madness by the flakes of fire, became wholly ungovernable, and broke away, spreading disorder in every direction; the whole body swept helplessly along the fire of the Polish infantry, and in a few minutes was so completely annihilated that, of a regiment of cuirassiers who bore inscribed on their helmets the "Invincibles," not a man escaped. The wreck of the routed cavalry, pursued by the lancers, carried along in its flight the columns of infantry; a general retreat commenced, and the cry of "Poland for ever" reached the walls of Warsaw to cheer the hearts of its anxious inhabitants. So terrible was the fire of that day, that in the Polish army there was not a single general or staff officer who had not his horse killed or

wounded under him; two thirds of the officers, and, perhaps, of the soldiers, had their clothes pierced with balls, and more than a tenth part of the army were wounded. Thirty thousand Russians and ten thousand Poles were left on the field of battle; rank upon rank lay prostrate on the earth, and the Forest of Elders was so strewn with bodies that it received from that day the name of the "Forest of the Dead." The Czar heard with dismay, and all Europe with astonishment, that the crosser of the Balkan had been foiled under the walls of Warsaw.

All day, my companion said, the cannonading was terrible. Crowds of citizens, of both sexes and all ages, were assembled on the spot where we stood, earnestly watching the progress of the battle, sharing in all its vicissitudes, in the highest state of excitement as the clearing up of the columns of smoke showed when the Russians or the Poles had fled; and he described the entry of the remnant of the Polish army into Warsaw as sublime and terrible; their hair and faces were begrimed with powder and blood; their armour shattered and broken, and all, even dying men, were singing patriotic songs; and when the fourth regiment, among whom was a brother of my companion, and who had particularly distinguished themselves in the battle, crossed the bridge and filed slowly through the streets, their lances shivered against the cuirasses of the guards, their helmets broken, their faces black and spotted with blood, some erect, some tottering, and some barely able to sustain themselves in the saddle, above the stern chorus of patriotic songs rose the distracted cries of mothers, wives, daughters, and lovers, seeking among this broken band for forms dearer than life, many of whom were

then sleeping on the battle-field. My companion told me that he was then a lad of seventeen, and had begged with tears to be allowed to accompany his brother ; but his widowed mother extorted from him a promise that he would not attempt it. All day he had stood with his mother on the very spot where we did, his hand in hers, which she grasped convulsively, as every peal of cannon seemed the knell of her son ; and when the lancers passed, she sprang from his side as she recognised in the drooping figure of an officer, with his spear broken in his hand, the figure of her gallant boy. He was then reeling in his saddle, his eye was glazed and vacant, and he died that night in their arms.

The tyranny of the Grand-duke Constantine, the imperial viceroy, added to the hatred of the Russians, which is the birthright of every Pole, induced the unhappy revolution of eighteen hundred and thirty. Although, on the death of Alexander, Constantine waived in favour of his brother Nicolas his claim to the throne of Russia, his rule in Poland shows that it was not from any aversion to the exercise of power.

When Constantine was appointed its commander-in-chief, the Polish army ranked with the bravest in Europe. The Polish legions under Dombrowski and Poniatowski had kept alive the recollections of the military glory of their fallen nation. Almost annihilated by the bloody battles in Italy, where they met their old enemies under Suwarrow, the butcher of Praga, the proud remnants reorganized and formed the fifth corps of the "grande armée," distinguished themselves at Smolensk, Borodino, Kalouga, and the passage of the Berezina, took the field with the wreck of the army in Saxony, fought at Dresden and Leipsic, and, when Napo

leon told them, brave as they were, that they were free to go home if they pleased, they scorned to desert him in his waning fortunes, and accompanied him to Paris. Alexander promised an amnesty, and they marched with him to Warsaw. Within the first six months many officers of this army had been grossly insulted; an eyewitness told me that he had seen, on the great square of Warsaw, the high sheriff tear off the epaulettes from the shoulders of an officer, and, in the presence of the whole troops, strike him on the cheek with his hand.

It would, perhaps, be unjust to enumerate, as I heard them, the many causes of oppression that roused to revolt the slumbering spirit of the Poles; in the midst of which the French revolution threw all Poland into commotion. The three days of July were hailed with rapture by every patriotic heart; the new revolutionary movements in Belgium cheered them on; and eighty young men, torn from the altars while praying for the souls of their murdered countrymen on the anniversary of the butchery at Praga, thrilled every heart and hurried the hour of retribution. The enthusiasm of youth struck the first blow. A band of ardent young men of the first families attended the meetings of secret patriotic associations; and six of them, belonging to the military school, suspecting they were betrayed, early in the evening went to their barracks, and proposed to their comrades a plan for liberating their country. The whole corps, not excepting one sick in bed, amounting in all to about a hundred and fifty, took up arms, and, under a lieutenant of nineteen, attacked the palace of Constantine, and almost secured his person. The grand-duke was then asleep on a couch in a room opening upon a

corridor of the Belvidere Palace, and, roused by a faithful valet, had barely time to throw a robe over him and fly. The insurgents, with cries of vengeance, rushed into the interior of the palace, driving before them the chief of the city police and the aid-de-camp of the grand-duke. The latter had the presence of mind to close the door of the grand-duke's apartment before he was pierced through with a dozen bayonets. The wife of the grand-duke, the beautiful and interesting princess for whom he had sacrificed a crown, hearing the struggle, was found on her knees offering up prayers to Heaven for the safety of her husband. Constantine escaped by a window; and the young soldiers, foiled in their attempt, marched into the city, and, passing the barracks of the Russian guards, daringly fired a volley to give notice of their coming. Entering the city, they broke open the prisons and liberated the state prisoners, burst into the theatres, crying out, "Women, home; men, to arms," forced the arsenal, and in two hours forty thousand men were under arms. Very soon the fourth Polish regiment joined them; and before midnight the remainder of the Polish troops in Warsaw, declaring that their children were too deeply implicated to be abandoned, espoused the popular cause. Some excesses were committed; and General Stanislaus Potocki, distinguished in the revolution of Kosciusko, for hesitating was killed, exclaiming with his last breath that it was dreadful to die by the hands of his countrymen.

Chlopicki, the comrade of Kosciusko, was proclaimed dictator by an immense multitude in the Champ de Mars. For some time the inhabitants of Warsaw were in a delirium; the members of the patriotic association,

and citizens of all classes, assembled every day, carrying arms, and with glasses in their hands, in the saloon of the theatre and at a celebrated coffee-house, discussing politics and singing patriotic songs. In the theatres the least allusion brought down thunders of applause, and at the end of the piece heralds appeared on the stage waving the banners of the dismembered provinces. In the pit they sang in chorus national hymns; the boxes answered them; and sometimes the spectators finished by scaling the stage and dancing the Mazurka and the Cracoviak.

The fatal issue of this revolution is well known. The Polish nation exerted and exhausted its utmost strength, and the whole force of the colossal empire was brought against it, and, in spite of prodigies of valour, crushed it. The moment, the only moment when gallant, chivalric, and heroic Poland could have been saved and restored to its rank among nations, was suffered to pass by, and no one came to her aid. The minister of France threw out the bold boast that a hundred thousand men stood ready to march to her assistance; but France and all Europe looked on and saw her fall. Her expiring diet ordered a levy in mass, and made a last appeal, "In the name of God; in the name of liberty; of a nation placed between life and death; in the name of kings and heroes who have fought for religion and humanity; in the name of future generations; in the name of justice and the deliverance of Europe;" but her dying appeal was unheard. Her last battle was under the walls of Warsaw; and then she would not have fallen, but even in Poland there were traitors. The governor of Warsaw blasted the laurels won in the early battles of the revolution by

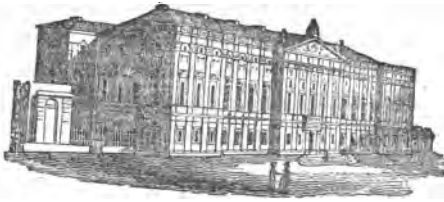
the blackest treason. He ordered General Romarino to withdraw eight thousand soldiers and chase the Russians beyond the frontier at Brezc. While he was gone the Russians pressed Warsaw; he could have returned in time to save it, but was stopped with directions not to advance until farther orders. In the mean time Warsaw fell, with the curse of every Pole upon the head of its governor. The traitor now lives ingloriously in Russia, disgraced and despised, while the young lieutenant is in unhappy but not unhonoured exile in Siberia.

So ended the last heroic struggle of Poland. It is dreadful to think so, but it is greatly to be feared that Poland is blotted for ever from the list of nations. Indeed, by a late imperial ukase, Poland is expunged from the map of Europe; her old and noble families are murdered, imprisoned, or in exile; her own language is excluded from the offices of government, and even from the public schools; her national character destroyed; her national dress proscribed; her national colours trampled under foot; her national banner, the white eagle of Poland, is in the dust. Warsaw is abandoned, and become a Russian city; her best citizens are wandering in exile in foreign lands, while Cossack and Circassian soldiers are filing through her streets, and the banner of Russia is waving over her walls.

Perhaps it is not relevant, but I cannot help saying that there is no exaggeration in the stories which reach us at our own doors of the misfortunes and sufferings of Polish exiles. I have met them wandering in many different countries, and particularly I remember one at Cairo. He had fought during the whole Polish revo-

lution, and made his escape when Warsaw fell. He was a man of about thirty-five years of age, dressed in a worn military frockcoat, and carrying himself with a manly and martial air. He had left a wife and two children at Warsaw. At Constantinople he had written to the emperor requesting permission to return, and even promising never again to take up arms against Russia, but had received for answer that the amnesty was over and the day of grace was past; and the unfortunate Pole was then wandering about the world like a cavalier of fortune or a knight of romance, with nothing to depend upon but his sword. He had offered his services to the sultan and to the Pacha of Egypt; he was then poor, and, with the bearing of a gentleman and the pride of a soldier, was literally begging his bread. I could sympathize in the misfortunes of an exiled Pole, and felt that his distress must indeed be great, that he who had perilled life and ties dearer than life in the cause of an oppressed country, should offer his untarnished sword to the greatest despot that ever lived.

The general appearance of Warsaw is imposing. It stands on a hill of considerable elevation on the left bank of the Vistula; the Zamech or Chateau of the Kings of Poland spreads its wings midway between the river and the summit of the hill, and churches and towering spires checker at different heights the distant horizon. Most of the houses are built of stone, or brick stuccoed; they are numbered in one continued series throughout the city, beginning from the royal palace (occupied by Pas-kiewitch), which is numbered *one*, and rising above number five thousand. The churches are numerous and



Royal Palace at Warsaw.

magnificent; the palaces, public buildings, and many of the mansions of noblemen, are on a large scale, very showy, and, in general, striking for their architectural designs. One great street runs irregularly through the whole city, of which Miodowa, or Honey-street, and the Novoy Swiat, or New World, are the principal and most modern portions. As in all aristocratic cities, the streets are badly paved, and have no trottoirs for the foot-passengers. The Russian drosky is in common use; the public carriages are like those in Western Europe, though of a low form; the linings generally painted red; the horses large and handsome, with large collars of red or green, covered with small brass rings, which sound like tinkling bells; and the carts are like those in our own city, only longer and lower, and more like our brewer's dray. The hotels are numerous, generally kept in some of the old palaces, and at the entrance of each stands a large porter, with a cocked hat and silver-headed cane, to show travellers to their apartments and receive the names of visitors. There are two principal kukiernia, something like the French cafés, where many of the Varsovians breakfast and lounge in the mornings.

The Poles, in their features, looks, customs, and

manners, resemble Asiatics rather than Europeans ; and they are, no doubt, descended from Tartar ancestors. Though belonging to the Sclavonic race, which occupies nearly the whole extent of the vast plains of Western Europe, they have advanced more than the others from the rude and barbarous state which characterizes this race ; and this is particularly manifest at Warsaw. An eyewitness, describing the appearance of the Polish deputies at Paris sent to announce the election of Henry of Anjou as successor of Sigismund, says, "It is impossible to describe the general astonishment when we saw these ambassadors in long robes, fur caps, sabres, arrows, and quivers ; but our admiration was excessive when we saw the sumptuousness of their equipages ; the scabbards of their swords adorned with jewels ; their bridles, saddles, and horse-cloths decked in the same way," &c.

But none of this barbaric display is now seen in the streets of Warsaw. Indeed, immediately on entering it I was struck with the European aspect of things. It seemed almost, though not quite, like a city of Western Europe, which may, perhaps, be ascribed, in a great measure, to the entire absence of the semi-Asiatic costumes so prevalent in all the cities of Russia, and even at St. Petersburg ; and the only thing I remarked peculiar in the dress of the inhabitants was the remnant of a barbarous taste for show, exhibiting itself in large breastpins, shirt-buttons, and gold chains over the vest ; the mustache is universally worn. During the war of the revolution immediately succeeding our own, Warsaw stood the heaviest brunt ; and when Kosciusko fell fighting before it, its population was reduced to sev-

enty-five thousand. Since that time it has increased, and is supposed now to be one hundred and forty thousand, thirty thousand of whom are Jews. Calamity after calamity has befallen Warsaw ; still its appearance is that of a gay city. Society consists altogether of two distinct and distant orders, the nobles and the peasantry, without any intermediate degrees. I except, of course, the Jews, who form a large item in her population, and whose long beards, thin and anxious faces, and piercing eyes met me at every corner of Warsaw. The peasants are in the lowest stage of mental degradation. The nobles, who are more numerous than in any other country in Europe, have always, in the eyes of the public, formed the people of Poland. They are brave, prompt, frank, hospitable, and gay, and have long been called the French of the North, being French in their habits, fond of amusements, and living in the open air, like the loungeur in the Palais Royal, the Tuileries, the Boulevards, and Luxembourg, and particularly French in their political feelings, the surges of a revolution in Paris being always felt at Warsaw. They regard the Germans with mingled contempt and aversion, calling them "dumb" in contrast with their own fluency and loquacity ; and before their fall were called by their neighbours the "proud Poles." They consider it the deepest disgrace to practise any profession, even law or medicine, and, in case of utmost necessity, prefer the plough. A Sicilian, a fellow-passenger from Palermo to Naples, who one moment was groaning in the agony of seasickness and the next playing on his violin, said to me, "Canta il, signore?" "Do you sing?" I answered "No;" and he continued, "Suonate?" "Do you play?" I again answered "No;" and he

asked me, with great simplicity, "Cosa fatte? Niente?" "What do you do? Nothing!" and I might have addressed the same question to every Pole in Warsaw.

The whole business of the country is in the hands of the Jews, and all the useful and mechanical arts are practised by strangers. I did not find a Pole in a single shop in Warsaw; the proprietors of the hotels and coffee-houses are strangers, principally Germans; my tailor was a German, my shoemaker a Frenchman, and the man who put a new crystal in my watch an Italian from Milan. But though this entire absence of all useful employment is, on grounds of public policy, a blot on their national character, as a matter of feeling it rather added to the interest with which I regarded the "proud Poles;" and perhaps it was imaginary, but I felt all the time I was in Warsaw that, though the shops and coffee-houses were open, and crowds thronged the streets, a sombre air hung over the whole city; and if for a moment this impression left me, a company of Cossacks, with their wild music, moving to another station, or a single Russian officer riding by in a drosky, wrapped in his military cloak, reminded me that the foot of a conqueror was upon the necks of the inhabitants of Warsaw. This was my feeling after a long summer day's stroll through the streets; and in the evening I went to the theatre, which was a neat building, well filled, and brilliantly lighted; but the idea of a pervading and gloomy spirit so haunted me that in a few moments I left what seemed a heartless mockery of pleasure. I ought to add that I did not understand a word of the piece; the *triste* air which touched me may have been induced by the misfortunes of the stage hero; and, in

all probability, I should have astonished a melancholy-looking neighbour if, acting under my interpretation of his visage, I had expressed to him my sympathy in the sufferings of his country.

CHAPTER XII.

Religion of Poland.—Sunday in Warsaw.—Baptized Jews.—Palaces of the Polish Kings.—Sobieski.—Field of Vola.—Wreck of a Warrior.—The Poles in America.—A Polish Lady.—Troubles of a Passport.—Departure from Warsaw.—An official Rachel.—A mysterious Visitor.

SUNDAY at Warsaw. Poland is distinguished above the other nations of Europe as a land of religious toleration. So late as the latter part of the tenth century, the religion of Poland was a gross idolatry; and, mingled with the rites of their own country, they worshipped, under other names, Jupiter, Pluto, Mars, Venus, Diana, and others of the pagan deities. During the reign of Mieczylaus I. of the Piast dynasty, the monks introduced Christianity. The prince himself was proof against the monks, but received from woman's lips the principles of the Christian religion. Enamoured of Dombrowska, the daughter of the Duke of Bohemia, a country which had then lately embraced Christianity, who refused to accept his suit unless he was baptized, Mieczylaus sacrificed the superstitions and prejudices of his fathers on the altar of love. But the religion which he embraced for the sake of Dombrowka he afterward propagated for its own; became an ardent champion of the cross; broke down with his own hands the idols of his country; built Christian churches on the ruins

of pagan temples ; and, in the ardour of his new faith, issued an edict that, when any portion of the Gospel was read, the hearers should half draw their swords to testify their readiness to defend its truth.

In the reign of the "famous" John Sobjeski, the annals of Poland, till that time free from this disgrace, were stained by one of the most atrocious acts of barbarity recorded in the history of religious persecution. A Lithuanian nobleman, a religious and benevolent man, but sufficiently intelligent to ridicule some of the current superstitions, and very rich, on account of a note made in the margin of a book, written by a stupid German, was tried for atheism by a council of bigoted Catholic bishops, and found guilty, not only of "having denied the existence of a God, but the doctrine of the Trinity and the Divine maternity of the Virgin Mary." Zaluski, one of the villains concerned in the torment, writes, "The convict was led to the scaffold, where the executioner, with a red-hot iron, tore his tongue and his mouth, *with which he had been cruel toward God* ; then they burned his hands, instruments of the abominable production, at a slow fire. The sacrilegious paper was thrown into the flame ; himself last ; that monster of the age, that deicide, was cast into the flames of expiation, if such a crime could be atoned."

In seventeen hundred and twenty-six the Jesuits, making a public procession with the Host in the streets of Thorn, the young scholars of the order insisted that some Lutheran children should kneel ; and on their refusal a scuffle ensued between the Jesuits and townspeople, most of whom were Lutherans, in which the enraged townspeople broke open the Jesuits' college, profaned all the objects of worship, and, among others,

an image of the Virgin. The Catholics of Poland, assembled in the diet, almost infuriated with fanatic zeal, condemned to death the magistrates of Thorn for not exercising their authority. Seven of the principal citizens were also condemned to death; many were imprisoned or banished; three persons, accused of throwing the Virgin's image into the fire, lost their right arms, and the whole city was deprived of the freedom of public worship.

This was the last act of religious persecution in Poland; but even yet the spirit of the reformation has made but little progress, and the great bulk of the people are still groping in the darkness of Catholicism. On every public road and in all the streets of Warsaw stand crosses, sometimes thirty feet high, with a figure of the Saviour large as life, sometimes adorned with flowers and sometimes covered with rags.

As in all Catholic cities, a Sunday in Warsaw is a fête day. I passed the morning in strolling through the churches, which are very numerous, and some of them, particularly the Cathedral Church of St. John and that of the Holy Cross, of colossal dimensions. The scene was the same as in the Catholic churches in Italy; at every door crowds were entering and passing out, nobles, peasants, shopmen, drosky boys, and beggars; the highborn lady descended from her carriage, dipped her fingers in the same consecrated water, and kneeled on the same pavement side by side with the beggar; alike equal in God's house, and outside the door again an immeasurable distance between them.

At twelve o'clock, by appointment, I met my travelling companion and another of his friends in the Jardin

VOL. II.—T

de Saxe, the principal public garden in Warsaw. It stands in the very heart of the city, in the rear of the Palais de Saxe, built by the Elector of Saxony when called to the throne of Poland. It is enclosed all around by high brick walls, screened by shrubs, and vines, and trees rising above, so as to exclude the view of the houses facing it. It is handsomely laid out with lawns and gravel-walks, and adorned with trees; and as the grounds are exceedingly rural and picturesque, and the high walls and trees completely shut out the view of all surrounding objects, I could hardly realize that I was in the centre of a populous city. It was then the fashionable hour for promenade, and all the élite of Warsaw society was there. I had heard of this Sunday promenade, and, after making one or two turns on the principal walk, I remarked to my companions that I was disappointed in not seeing, as I had expected, a collection of the highborn and aristocratic Poles; but they told me that, changed as Warsaw was in every particular, in nothing was this change more manifest than in the character of this favourite resort. From boyhood, one of them had been in the habit of walking there regularly on the same day and at the same hour; and he told me that, before the revolution, it had always been thronged by a gay and brilliant collection of the nobility of Warsaw; and he enumerated several families whose names were identified with the history of Poland, who were in the habit of being there at a certain time, as regularly as the trees which then shaded our walk; but since the revolution these families were broken up and dispersed, and their principal members dead or in exile, or else lived retired, too proud in their fallen state to exhibit themselves in pub-

lic places, where they were liable to be insulted by the presence of their Russian conquerors; and I could well appreciate the feeling which kept them away, for Russian officers, with their rattling swords and nodding plumes, and carrying themselves with a proud and lordly air, were the most conspicuous persons present. I had noticed one party, a dark, pale, and interesting-looking man, with an elegant lady and several children and servants, as possessing, altogether, a singularly melancholy and aristocratic appearance; but the interest I was disposed to take in them was speedily dispelled by hearing that he was a baptized Jew, a money broker, who had accumulated a fortune by taking advantage of the necessities of the distressed nobles. Indeed, next to the Russian officers, the baptized Jews were the most prominent persons on the promenade. These persons form a peculiar class in Warsaw, occupying a position between the Israelites and Christians, and amalgamating with neither. Many of them are rich, well educated, and accomplished, and possess great elegance of appearance and manner. They hate most cordially their unregenerated brethren, and it is unnecessary to say that this hate is abundantly reciprocated. It was with a feeling of painful interest that I strolled through this once favourite resort of the nobility of Warsaw; and my companions added to this melancholy feeling by talking in a low tone, almost in whispers, and telling me that now the promenade was always *triste* and dull; and in going out they led me through a private walk, where an old noble, unable to tear himself from a place consecrated by the recollections of his whole life, still continued to take his daily walk apart from the crowd, wearing out the evening of

his days in bitter reflections on the fallen condition of his kindred and country.

We dined, as usual, at a restaurant, where at one table was a party of Swiss, here, as at Moscow, exercising that talent, skill, and industry which they exhibit all over the world, and consoling themselves for the privations of exile with the hope of one day being able to return to their native mountains, never to leave them again.

After dinner we took an open carriage, and at the barrier entered one of the numerous avenues of the Ujazdow, leading to Belvidere, the country residence of the late Grand-duke Constantine. The avenue is divided by rows of old and stately trees, terminating in a large circular octagon, from which branch off eight other avenues, each at a short distance crossed by others, and forming a sort of labyrinth, said to be one of the finest drives and promenades in Europe, and on Sundays the rendezvous of nearly the entire population of Warsaw. It was a beautiful afternoon, and the throng of carriages, and horsemen, and thousands of pedestrians, and the sun, occasionally obscured and then breaking through the thick foliage, darkening and again lighting up the vista through the trees, gave a beauty to the landscape, and a variety and animation to the scene, that I had not yet found in Warsaw. Passing the Belvidere Palace, my companions described the manner in which the students had made their attack upon it, and pointed out the window by which Constantine escaped. Turning from one of the splendid avenues of the Ujazdow, we crossed a stone bridge, on which stands the equestrian statue of John Sobieski, his horse rearing over the body of a prostrate Turk; it was erected to him as the sa-

viour of Christendom after he had driven the Turks from the walls of Vienna. Beyond this we entered the grounds and park of Lazienki, formerly the country residence of Stanislaus Augustus, situated in a most delightful spot on the banks of the Vistula.

The royal villa stands in the midst of an extensive park of stately old trees, and the walks lead to a succession of delightful and romantic spots, adorned with appropriate and tasteful buildings. Among them, on an island reached by crossing a rustic bridge, are a winter and a summer theatre, the latter constructed so as to resemble, in a great measure, an ancient amphitheatre in ruins; in it performances used formerly to take place in the open air. I am not given to dreaming, and there was enough in the scenes passing under my eyes to employ my thoughts; but, as I wandered through the beautiful walks, and crossed romantic bridges, composed of the trunks and bended branches of trees, I could not help recurring to the hand that had planned these beauties, the good King Stanislaus.

"Dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,"

hurled Stanislaus from his throne; and as I stood under the portico of his palace, I could but remember that its royal builder had fled from it in disguise, become a prisoner to the Turks, and died an exile in a foreign land.

From here we rode to the chateau of Villanow, another and one of the most interesting of the residences of the kings of Poland, constructed by John Sobieski and perhaps the only royal structure in Europe which, like some of the great edifices of Egypt and Rome, was

erected by prisoners taken in war, being constructed entirely by the hands of Turkish captives. It was the favourite residence of Sobieski, where he passed most of his time when not in arms, and where he closed his days. Until lately, the chamber and bed on which he died might still be seen. The grounds extend for a great distance along the banks of the Vistula, and many of the noble trees which now shade the walks were planted by Sobieski's own hands. The reign of Sobieski is the most splendid era in the history of Poland. The great statue I had just passed presented him as the conqueror of the Turks, the deliverer of Christendom, the redoubtable warrior, riding over the body of a prostrate Mussulman; and every stone in the palace is a memorial of his warlike triumphs; but if its inner chambers could tell the scenes of which they had been the witness, loud and far as the trumpet of glory has sounded his name, no man would envy John Sobieski. The last time he unsheathed his sword, in bitterness of heart he said, "It will be easier to get the better of the enemies I am in quest of than my own sons." He returned broken with vexation and shattered with wounds, more than sixty years old, and two thirds of his life spent in the tented field; his queen drove his friends from his side, destroyed that domestic peace which he valued above all things, and filled the palace with her plots and intrigues. He had promised to Zaluski an office which the queen wished to give to another. "My friend," said the dying monarch, "you know the rights of marriage, and you know if I can resist the prayers of the queen; it depends, then, on you that I live tranquil or that I be constantly miserable. She has already promised to another this vacant office, and if I

do not consent to it I am obliged to fly my house. I know not where I shall go to die in peace. You pity me ; you will not expose me to public ridicule." Old and infirm, with gray hairs and withered laurels, a prey to lingering disease, the deathbed of the dying warrior was disturbed by a noise worse than the din of battle ; and before the breath had left him, an intriguing wife and unnatural children were wrangling over his body for the possession of his crown. A disgraceful struggle was continued a short time after his death. One by one his children died, and there is not now any living of the name of Sobieski.

The next day I visited the field of Vola, celebrated as the place of election of the Kings of Poland. It is about five miles from Warsaw, and was formerly surrounded by a ditch, with three gates, one for great Poland, one for little Poland, and one for Lithuania. In the middle were two enclosures, one of an oblong shape, surrounded by a kind of rampart or ditch, in the centre of which was erected, at the time of election, a vast temporary building of wood, covered at the top and open at the sides, which was called the zopa, and occupied by the senate ; and the other of a circular shape, called the kola, in which the nuncios assembled in the open air. The nobles, from a hundred and fifty thousand to two hundred thousand in number, encamped on the plain in separate bodies under the banners of their respective palatinates, with their principal officers in front on horseback. The primate, having declared the names of the candidates, kneeled down and chanted a hymn ; and then, mounting on horseback, went round the plain and collected the votes, the nobles not voting individually, but each palatinate in a

body. It was necessary that the election should be unanimous, and a single nobleman peremptorily stopped the election of Ladislaus VII. Being asked what objection he had to him, he answered, "None at all; but I will not suffer him to be king." After being by some means brought over, he gave the king as the reason for his opposition, "I had a mind to see whether our liberty was still in being or not. I am satisfied that it is, and your majesty shall not have a better subject than myself." If the palatinates agreed, the primate asked again, and yet a third time, if all were satisfied; and, after a general approbation, three times proclaimed the king; and the grand marshal of the crown repeated the proclamation three times at the gates of the camp. It was the exercise of this high privilege of electing their own king which created and sustained the lofty bearing of the Polish nobles, inducing the proud boast which, in a moment of extremity, an intrepid band made to their king, "What hast thou to fear with twenty thousand lances? If the sky should fall, we would keep it up with their points." But, unhappily, although the exercise of this privilege was confined only to the nobles, the election of a king often exhibited a worse picture than all the evils of universal suffrage with us. The throne was open to the whole world; the nobles were split into contending factions; foreign gold found its way among them, and sometimes they deliberated under the bayonets of foreign troops. Warsaw and its environs were a scene of violence and confusion, and sometimes the field of Vola was stained with blood. Still no man can ride over that plain without recurring to the glorious hour when Sobieski, covered with laurels won in fighting the bat-

ties of his country, amid the roar of cannon and the loud acclamations of the senate, the nobles, and the army, was hailed the chosen king of a free people.

I had enough of travelling post, and was looking out for some quiet conveyance to Cracow. A Jew applied to me, and I went with him to look at his carriage, which I found at a sort of "Bull's-head" stopping-place, an enormous vehicle without either bottom or top, being a species of framework like our hay-wagons, filled with straw to prevent goods and passengers from spilling out. He showed me a couple of rough-looking fellows, who would be my *compagnons de voyage*, and who said that we could all three lie very comfortably in the bottom of the vehicle. Their appearance did not add to the recommendation of the wagon; nevertheless, if I had understood the language and been strong enough for the rough work, I should perhaps have taken that conveyance, as, besides the probable incidents of the journey, it would give me more insight into the character of the people than a year's residence in the capital. Returning to my hotel, I found that a Polish officer had left his address, with a request for me to call upon him. I went, and found a man of about forty, middle sized, pale and emaciated, wounded and an invalid, wearing the Polish revolutionary uniform. It was the only instance in which I had seen this dress. After the revolution it had been absolutely proscribed; but the country being completely subdued, and the government in this particular case not caring to exercise any unnecessary harshness, he was permitted to wear it unmolested. It was, however, almost in mockery that he still wore the garb of a soldier; for if Poland had again burst her chains, and the unsheathed sword were put in his hands,

he could not have struck a blow to help her. Unfortunately, he could not speak French, or, rather, I may say fortunately, for in consequence of this I saw his lady, a pensive, melancholy, and deeply-interesting woman, dressed in black, in mourning for two gallant brothers who died in battle under the walls of Warsaw.

Their business with me was of a most commonplace nature. They had lately returned from a visit to some friends at Cracow, in a calèche hired at the frontier; and hearing from the peasant who drove them that a stranger was looking for a conveyance to that place, out of good-will to him desired to recommend him to me. The lady had hardly finished a sort of apologizing commencement before I had resolved to assent to almost anything she proposed; and when she stated the whole case, it was so exactly what I wanted, that I expressed myself under great obligations for the favour done me. I suggested, however, my doubts as to the propriety of undertaking the journey alone, without any interpreter; but, after a few words with the major, she replied that she would give full directions to the peasant as to the route. As the carriage could not go beyond the frontier, her husband would give me a letter to the commissaire at Michoof, who spoke French, and also to the postmaster; and, finally, she would herself make out for me a vocabulary of the words likely to be most necessary, so as to enable me to ask for bread, milk, eggs, &c.; and with this, and the Polish for "how much," I would get along without any difficulty. While she was writing, another officer came in, old and infirm, and also dressed in the Polish uniform. She rose from the table, met him almost at the door, kissed him affectionately, led him to a seat, and barely men-

tioning him to me as "*mon beau père*," resumed her work. While she was writing I watched attentively the whole three, and the expression of face with which the two officers regarded her was unspeakably interesting. They were probably unconscious of it, and perhaps it was only my fancy, but if the transient lighting of their sunken eyes meant anything, it meant that they who sat there in the garb and equipment of soldiers, who had stood in all the pride and vigour of manhood on bloody battle-fields, now looked to a feeble and lovely woman as their only staff and support in life. I would have told them how deeply I sympathized in the misfortunes of their suffering country, but their sadness seemed too deep and sacred. I knew that I could strike a responsive chord by telling them that I was an American, but I would not open their still bleeding wounds; at parting, however, I told them that I should remember in my own country and to their countrymen the kindness shown me here; and as soon as I mentioned that I was an American, the lady asked me the fate of her unhappy countrymen who had been landed as exiles on our shores, and I felt proud in telling them that they had found among our citizens that sympathy which brave men in misfortune deserve, and that our government had made a provision in land for the exiled compatriots of Kosciusko. She inquired particularly about the details of their occupation, and expressed the fear that their habits of life, most of them having been brought up as soldiers, unfitted them for usefulness among us. I did not then know how prophetic were her forebodings, and was saved the necessity of telling her, what I afterward read in a newspaper, that an unhappy portion of that band of exiles, discontented with

their mode of life, in attempting to cross the Rocky Mountains were cut to pieces by a party of Indians. Under the pressure of their immediate misfortunes they had not heard the fate of the exiles, and a ray of satisfaction played for a moment over their melancholy features in hearing that they had met with friends in America; and they told me to say to the Poles wherever I found them, that they need never again turn their eyes toward home. She added that the time had been when she and her friends would have extended the hand of welcome to a stranger in Poland; that, when a child, she had heard her father and brothers talk of liberty and the pressure of a foreign yoke, but, living in affluence, surrounded by friends and connexions, she could not sympathize with them, and thought it a feeling existing only in men, which women could not know; but actual occurrences had opened her eyes; her family had been crushed to the earth, her friends imprisoned, killed, or driven into exile, and yet, she added, turning to her husband and father, she ought not to mourn, for those dearest to her on earth were spared. But I could read in her face, as she bent her eyes upon their pallid features, that she felt they were spared only for a season.

Reluctantly I bade them farewell. A servant waited to go with me and show me the calèche, but I told him it was not worth while. I was in no humour for examining the spokes of carriage-wheels; and, if I had been obliged to ride on the tongue, I believe I should have taken it. I went to my hotel, and told my friend of my interview with the major and his lady. He knew them by reputation, and confirmed and strengthened all the interest I took in them, adding that both father and son had been among the first to take up arms during

the revolution, and at its unhappy termination were so beloved by the people of Warsaw that, in their wounded and crippled state, the Russian government had not proceeded to extremities with them.

I spent my last evening in Warsaw with my Pole and several of his friends at a herbata, that is, a sort of confectioner's shop, like a *café* in the south of Europe, where, as in Russia, tea is the popular drink. The next morning, as usual, my passport was not ready. My valet had been for it several times, and could not get it. I had been myself to the police-office, and waited until dark, when I was directed to call the next morning. I went at a little after eight, but I will not obtrude upon the reader the details of my vexation, nor the amiable feelings that passed my mind in waiting till twelve o'clock in a large anteroom. In my after wanderings I sometimes sat down upon a stump or on the sands of the desert, and meditated upon my folly in undergoing all manner of hardships when I might be sitting quietly at home; but when I thought of passports in Russia and Poland, I shook myself with the freedom of a son of the desert, and with the thought that I could turn my dromedary's head which way I pleased, other difficulties seemed light. Ancient philosophers extolled uniformity as a great virtue in a young man's character; and, if so, I was entitled to the highest praise, for in the matter of arranging my passport I was always in a passion. I do not know a single exception to the contrary. And if there was one thing more vexatious than another, it was in the case at Warsaw, where, after having been banished from office to office, I received my passport, still requiring the signature of the governor, and walked up to the palace, nursing my indignation, and expecting an

accumulation, I was ushered in by guards and soldiers, and at once disarmed of all animosity by the politeness and civility of the principal officers of government. I was almost sorry to be obliged to withhold my intended malediction. I hurried back to my hotel. My friend, with three or four of his Warsaw acquaintances, was waiting to see the last of me; my calèche was at the door, and I was already late for a start. I took my seat and bade them farewell. I promised to write to him on my arrival in Paris, and to continue a correspondence on my return home. Most unfortunately, I lost his address. He lived in some town in Poland, near the frontiers of Prussia, and probably at this moment thinks of me unkindly for my apparent neglect. Possibly we may meet again, though probably never; but if we do, though it do not happen till our heads are gray, we will have a rich fund of satisfaction in the recollections of our long journey to Warsaw.

I was again setting out alone. My guide or *conduc-teur* was a Polish peasant. Without having seen him, I had calculated upon making ordinary human intelligence, to some extent, a medium of communication; but I found that I had been too soaring in my ideas of the divinity of human nature. When I returned to the hotel I found him lying on the sidewalk asleep; a servant kicked him up and pointed me out as his master for the journey. He ran up and kissed my hand, and, before I was aware of his intention, stooped down and repeated the same salutation on my boot. An American, perhaps, more than any other, scorns the idea of man's debasing himself to his fellow-man; and so powerful was this feeling in me, that before I went abroad I almost despised a white man whom I saw engaged in a

menial office. I had outlived this feeling; but when I saw a tall, strong, athletic white man kneel down and kiss my foot, I could almost have spurned him from me. His whole dress was a long shirt coming down to his feet, supported by a broad leathern belt eight inches wide, which he used as a pocket, and a low, broad-brimmed hat, turned up all round, particularly at the sides, and not unlike the headgear of the Lebanon Shakers.

Before putting myself out of the reach of aid, I held a conversation with him through an interpreter. The lady of the major had made out a chart for me, specifying each day's journey, which he promised to observe, and added that he would be my slave if I would give him plenty to drink. With such a companion, then, I may say most emphatically that I was again setting out alone; but my calèche was even better than the Polish officer represented it, abundantly provided with pockets for provisions, books, &c., and altogether so much more comfortable than anything I was used to, that I threw myself back in it with a feeling of great satisfaction. I rolled for the last time through the streets of Warsaw; looked out upon the busy throng; and though, in the perfectly indifferent air with which they turned to me, I felt how small a space I occupied in the world, I lighted my pipe and smoked in their faces, and, with a perfect feeling of independence toward all the world, at one o'clock I arrived at the barrier.

Here I found, to my great vexation, that I was an object of special consideration to the Emperor of Russia. A soldier came out for my passport, with which he went inside the guardhouse, and in a few minutes returned with the paper in his hands to ask me some

question. I could not answer him. He talked at me a little while, and again went within doors. After sitting for a few moments, vexed at the detention, but congratulating myself that if there was any irregularity it had been discovered before I had advanced far on my journey, I dismounted and went inside, where, after detaining me long enough to make me feel very uncomfortable, they endorsed the *visé* and let me go. I again lighted my pipe, and in the mildness and beauty of the day, the comfort of my calèche, and the docility and accommodating spirit of my peasant, forgot my past, and even the chance of future, difficulties. There was nothing particularly attractive in the road; the country was generally fertile, though tame and uninteresting. Late in the afternoon we stopped at a little town, of which I cannot make out the name. Like all the other towns on this side of Warsaw, in the centre was a square, with a range of wooden houses built all around fronting on the square, and the inhabitants were principally Jews. My peasant took off his horses and fed them in the square, and I went into a little *kukernia*, much cleaner and better than the town promised, where I had a cup of coffee and a roll of bread, and then strolled around the town, which, at this moment, presented a singular spectacle. The women and children were driving into the square herds of cows from the pasture-grounds in the unenclosed plains around; and, when all were brought in, each proprietor picked out his own cow and drove her home, and in a few moments opposite almost every house stood the family cow, with a woman or child milking her. After this the cows strolled back into the square to sleep till morning.

A little before dark we started, and, after a fine moon

light ride, at about ten o'clock drove into a sort of caravanserai, being simply a large shed or covered place for wagons and horses, with a room partitioned off in one corner for eating and sleeping. There were, perhaps, fifteen or twenty wagons under the shed, and their wagoners were all assembled in this room, some standing up and eating off a board stretched along the wall, some drinking, some smoking, and some already asleep on the floor. In one corner was a party of Jews, with the contents of a purse emptied before them, which they were dividing into separate parcels. The place was kept by a Jew, who, with his wife, or some woman belonging to the establishment, old and weatherbeaten, was running about serving and apparently quarrelling with all the wagoners. She seemed particularly disposed to quarrel with me, I believe because I could not talk to her, this being, in her eyes, an unpardonable sin. I could understand, however, that she wanted to prepare me a supper; but my appetite was not tempted by what I saw around me, and I lighted my pipe and smoked. I believe she afterward saw something in me which made her like me better; for while the wagoners were strewing themselves about the floor for sleep, she went out, and returning with a tolerably clean sheaf of straw under each arm, called me to her, and shaking them out in the middle of the floor, pointed me to my bed. My pipe was ended, and putting my carpet-bag under my head, I lay down upon the straw; and the old woman climbed up to a sort of platform in one corner, where, a moment after, I saw her sitting up with her arms above her head, with the utmost nonchalance changing her innermost garment.

I was almost asleep, when I noticed a strapping big

man, muffled up to the eyes, standing at my feet and looking in my face. I raised my head, and he walked round, keeping his eyes fixed upon me, and went away. Shortly after he returned, and again walking round, stopped and addressed me, "Spreechen sie Deutsch?" I answered by asking him if he could speak French; and not being able, he went away. He returned again, and again walked round as before, looking steadily in my face. I rose on my elbow, and followed him with my eyes till I had turned completely round with him, when he stopped as if satisfied with his observations, and in his broadest vernacular opened bluntly, "Hadn't we better speak English?" I need not say that I entirely agreed with him. I sprang up, and catching his hand, asked him what possessed him to begin upon me in Dutch; he replied by asking why I had answered in French, adding that his stout English figure ought to have made me know better; and after mutual good-natured recriminations, we kicked my straw bed about the floor, and agreed to make a night of it. He was the proprietor of a large iron manufactory, distant about three days' journey, and was then on his way to Warsaw. He went out to his carriage, and one of his servants produced a stock of provisions like the larder of a well-furnished hotel; and as I had gone to bed supperless, he seemed a good, stout, broad-shouldered guardian angel sent to comfort me. We sat on the back seat of the carriage, making a table of the front; and when we had finished, and the fragments were cleared away, we stretched our legs on the table, lighted our pipes, and talked till we fell asleep on each other's shoulder. Notwithstanding our intimacy so far, we should not have known each other by daylight, and at break of day

we went outside to examine each other. It was, however, perhaps hardly worth while to retain a recollection of features ; for, unless by some such accident as that which brought us together, we never shall meet again. We wrote our names in each other's pocketbook as a memorial of our meeting, and at the same moment started on our opposite roads.

CHAPTER XIII.

Friendly Solicitude.—Raddom.—Symptoms of a Difficulty.—A Court of Inquisition.—Showing a proper Spirit.—Troubles thickening.—Approaching the Climax.—Woman's Influence.—The Finale.—Utility of the Classics.—Another Latinist.—A Lucky Accident.—Arrival at Cracow.

At about eight o'clock we stopped to feed, and at the feeding-place met a German wagoner, who had lived in Hamburgh, and spoke English. He seemed much distressed at my not understanding the language of the country. He was a stout, burly fellow, eating and drinking all the time, and his great anxiety was lest I should starve on the road. He insisted upon my providing against such a fatality, and had a couple of fowls roasted for me, and wrapped in a piece of coarse brown paper ; and, at parting, backed by a group of friends, to whom he had told my story, he drank schnaps (at my expense) to my safe arrival at Cracow.

At eleven o'clock we reached Raddom. There was a large swinging gate at the barrier of the town, and the soldier opening it demanded my passport to be

visited by the police; he got into the calèche with me, and we drove into the town, stopped in the public square, and went to the bureau together. He left me in an antechamber, and went within, promising, by his manner, to expedite the business, and intimating an expectation of schnaps on his return. In a few minutes he returned, and barely opening the door for me to enter, hurried off, apparently with some misgivings about his schnaps. I entered, and found three or four men, who took no notice of me. I waited a few moments, and seeing my passport on a table before one of them, went up, and, certainly without intending anything offensive, took up the passport with a view of calling his attention to it; he jerked it out of my hand, and looking at me with an imperious and impertinent air, at the same time saying something I have no doubt in character with the expression of his face, he slapped it down on the table. Two or three officers coming in, looked at it, and laid it down again, until at length one man, the head of that department, I suppose, took it up, wrote a note, and giving the note and the passport to a soldier, directed me to follow him. The soldier conducted me to the bureau of the government, the largest building, and occupying a central position in the town, and left me in an antechamber with the usual retinue of soldiers and officers. In about a quarter of an hour he came out without the passport, and pulled me by the sleeve to follow him. I shook my head, asked for the passport, and, in fact, moved toward the door he had left. He seemed a good-hearted fellow, and, anxious to save me from any imprudence, pulled me back, held up his fingers, and pointing to the clock, told me to return at one; and

touching his hat respectfully, with probably the only French words he knew, "Adieu, seigneur," and a look of real interest, hurried away.

I strolled about the town, dropped in at a kukiernia, went to the square, and saw my peasant friend feeding his horses, apparently in some trouble and perplexity. I went back at one, and was ordered to come again at four. I would have remonstrated, but, besides that I could not make myself understood, when I attempted to speak they turned rudely away from me. I was vexed by the loss of the day, as I had agreed to pay a high price for the sake of going through a day sooner, and this might spoil my plan; and I was particularly vexed by the rough manner in which I was treated. I returned at four, and was conducted into a large chamber, in which were perhaps twenty or thirty clerks and inferior officers in the uniform of the government. As soon as I entered there was a general commotion. They had sent for a young man who spoke a little French to act as interpreter. The passport was put into his hands, and the first question he asked me was how I, an American, happened to be travelling under a Russian passport. I answered that it was not from any wish of mine, but in obedience to their own laws, and added the fact that this passport had been made out by the Russian ambassador at Constantinople; that under it I had been admitted into Russia, and travelled from the Black Sea to St. Petersburg, and from there down to Warsaw, as he might see from the paper itself, the *visés* of the proper authorities, down to that of the Governor of Warsaw, being regularly endorsed.

He then asked what my business was in Poland, and

what had induced me to come there. I answered, the same that had carried me into Russia, merely the curiosity of a traveller; and he then inquired what in particular I wanted to see in Poland. If I had consulted merely my feelings, I should have told him that, besides being attracted by the interest of her heroic history, I wished to see with my own eyes the pressure of a colossal foot upon the necks of a conquered people; that this very system of inquisition and *espionage* was one of the things I expected to see; but I, of course, forbore this, and answered only in general terms, and my answer was not satisfactory. He then began a more particular examination; asked my age, my height, the colour of my eyes, &c. At first I did not see the absurdity of this examination, and answered honestly according to the fact, as I believed it; but, all at once, it struck me that, as I did not remember the particulars of the description of my person in the passport, my own impromptu might very easily differ from it, and, catching an insulting expression on his face, I told him that he had the passport in his hands, and might himself compare my person with the description there given of me. He then read aloud the entire description; height, so many feet; eyes, such a colour, &c., &c.; scanned me from head to foot; peered into my eyes, stopping after each article to look at me and compare me with the description. By this time every man in the room had left his business and gathered round looking at me, and, after the reading of each article and the subsequent examination, there was a general shaking of heads and a contemptuous smile.

At the time I remembered, what had before suggested itself to me rather as a good thing, that, before embark-

ing for Europe, I had written on to the department of state for a passport, with a description of my person made out at the moment by a friend, not very flattering, and, perhaps, not very true, but good enough for the Continent, which I expected to be the extent of my tour; and I felt conscious that, on a severe examination, my nose might be longer, or my eyes grayer, or in some other point different from the description. This, added to their close and critical examination, at first embarrassed me considerably, but the supercilious and insulting manner in which the examination was conducted roused my indignation and restored my self-possession. I saw, from the informal way in which the thing was done, that this was a mere preliminary inquisition, and not the court to sit in judgment; and I had noticed from the beginning that most of these men were Poles, who had sold themselves to Russia for petty place and pay in her offices, traitors in their hearts and lives, apostates from every honourable feeling, and breathing a more infernal spirit against their enslaved country than the Russians themselves; and I told the interpreter, as coolly as the nature of the case would admit, to accept for himself, and to convey to his associates, the assurance that I should remember their little town as long as I lived; that I had then travelled from England through France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Russia, and had nowhere met such wanton rudeness and insult as from them; that I did not think it possible that in any European government twenty of its officers would laugh and sneer at the embarrassment of a stranger without a single one stepping forward to assist him; that I deeply regretted the occurrence of such a circumstance in Poland; that I felt convinced that there was not a truehearted Pole

among them, or my character as an American would have saved me from insult.

The interpreter seemed a little abashed, but I could see in the vindictive faces of the rest that they were greatly irritated. The examination was cut short, and I was directed to come again at half past five, when the commandant, who had been sent for, would be there. By this time there was some excitement in the streets, and, as I afterward learned, it was noised through the little town that an American was detained on suspicion of travelling under a false passport. My calèche had been standing in the public square all day. I had been noticed going to and from the offices with a soldier at my heels, and my poor Pole had been wandering up and down the streets, telling everybody his fears and interest in me, and particularly his anxiety about ten rubles I had promised him. As I passed along, people turned round and looked at me. I went to a kukiernia, where the dame had been very smiling and attentive, and could not get even a look from her. I went to another; several men were earnestly talking, who became silent the moment I entered. A small matter created an excitement in that little place. It was a rare thing for a traveller to pass through it; the Russian government threw every impediment in the way, and had made the road so vexatious that it was almost broken up. The French or the citizens of a free country like America were always suspected of being political emissaries to stir up the Poles to revolution, and it seemed as if, under that despotic government, to be suspected was to be guilty. The Poles were in the habit of seeing slight offences visited with terrible punishments, and probably half the little town looked on me as a doomed man. I went

back to the square and took a seat on my calèche ; my poor Pole sat on the box looking at me ; he had followed me all over, and, like the rest, seemed to regard me as lost. I had probably treated him with more kindness than he was accustomed to receive, though, for every new kindness, he vexed me anew by stooping down and kissing my foot.

At half past five o'clock I was again at the door of the palace. On the staircase I met the young man who had acted as interpreter ; he would have avoided me, but I stopped him and asked him to return with me. I held on to him, asking him if the commandant spoke French ; begged him, as he would hope himself to find kindness in a strange country, to go back and act as a medium of explanation ; but he tore rudely away, and hurried down stairs. A soldier opened the door and led me into the same apartment as before. The clerks were all at their desks writing ; all looked up as I entered, but not one offered me a seat, nor any the slightest act of civility. I waited a moment, and they seemed studiously to take no notice of me. I felt outrageous at their rudeness. I had no apprehensions of any serious consequences beyond, perhaps, that of a detention until I could write to Mr. Wilkins, our ambassador at St. Petersburg, and resolved not to be trampled upon by the understrappers. I walked up to the door of the commandant's chamber, when one man, who had been particularly insulting during the reading of the passport, rudely intercepted me, and leaning his back against the door, flourished his hands before him to keep me from entering. Fortunately, I fell back in time to prevent even the tip end of his fingers touching me. My blood flashed through me

VOL. II.—X

like lightning, and even now I consider myself a miracle of forbearance that I did not strike him.

In a few moments the door opened, and a soldier beckoned me to enter. Directly in front, at the other end of the room, behind a table, sat the commandant, a grim, gaunt-looking figure about fifty, his military coat buttoned tight up in his throat, his cap and sword on the table by his side, and in his hands my unlucky passport. As I walked toward him he looked from the passport to me, and from me to the passport; and when I stopped at the table he read over again the whole description, at every clause looking at me; shook his head with a grim smile of incredulity, and laid it down, as if perfectly satisfied. I felt that my face was flushed with indignation, and, perhaps, to a certain extent, so distorted with passion that it would have been difficult to recognise me as the person described. I suggested to him that the rude treatment I had met with in the other room had no doubt altered the whole character of my face, but he waved his hand for me to be silent; and, taking up a sheet of paper, wrote a letter or order, or something which I did not understand, and gave it to a soldier, who took it off to one corner and stamped it. The commandant then folded up the passport, enclosed it in the letter, and handed it again to the soldier, who carried it off and affixed to it an enormous wax seal, which looked very ominous and Siberian-like. I was determined not to suffer from the want of any effort on my part, and pulled out my old American passport, under which I had travelled in France and Italy, and also a new one which Commodore Porter had given me in Constantinople. He looked at them without any comment and without understanding them; and, when the soldier returned with the paper and the

big seal, he rose, and, without moving a muscle, waved with his hand for me to follow the soldier. I would have resisted if I had dared. I was indignant enough to do some rash thing, but at every step was a soldier; I saw the folly of it, and, grinding my teeth with vexation and rage, I did as I was ordered.

At the door of the palace we found a large crowd, who, knowing my appointment for this hour, were waiting to hear the result. A line of people was formed along the walk, who, seeing me under the charge of a soldier, turned round and looked at me with ominous silence. We passed under the walls of the prison, and the prisoners thrust their arms through the bars and hailed me, and seemed to claim me as a companion, and to promise me a welcome among them. For a moment I was infected with some apprehensions. In my utter ignorance as to what it all meant, I ran over in my mind the stories I had heard of the exercise of despotic authority, and for one moment thought of my German host at Moscow and a journey to Siberia by mistake. I did not know where the soldier was taking me, but felt relieved when we had got out of the reach of the voices of the prisoners, and more so when we stopped before a large house, which I remarked at once as a private dwelling, though a guard of honour before the door indicated it as the residence of an officer of high rank. We entered, and were ushered into the presence of the governor and commander-in-chief. He was, of course, a Russian, a man about sixty, in the uniform of a general officer, and attended by an aide-camp about thirty. I waited till the soldier had delivered his message; and, before the governor had broken the seal, I carried the war into the enemy's country by complaining of the rude treatment I had received, in-

interrupted in my journey under a passport which had carried me all over Russia, and laughed at and insulted by the officers of the government, at the same time congratulating myself that I had at last met those who could at least tell me why I was detained, and would give me an opportunity of explaining anything apparently wrong. I found the governor, as everywhere else in Russia where I could get access to the principal man, a gentleman in his bearing and feelings. He requested me to be seated, while he retired into another apartment to examine the passport. The aid-de-camp remained, and I entertained him with my chapter of grievances; he put the whole burden of the incivility upon the Poles, who, as he said, filled all the inferior offices of government, but told me, too, that the country was in such an unsettled state that it was necessary to be very particular in examining all strangers; and particularly as at that time several French emissaries were suspected to be secretly wandering in Poland, trying to stir up revolution. The governor stayed so long that I began to fear there was some technical irregularity which might subject me to detention, and I was in no small degree relieved when he sent for me, and telling me that he regretted the necessity for giving such annoyance and vexation to travellers, handed me back the passport, with a direction to the proper officer to make the necessary *visé* and let me go. I was so pleased with the result that I did not stop to ask any questions, and to this day I do not know particularly why I was detained.

By this time it was nine o'clock, and when we returned the bureau was closed. The soldier stated the case to the loungers about the door, and now all, inclu-

ding some of the scoundrels who had been so rude to me in the morning, were anxious to serve me. One of them conducted me to an apartment near, where I was ushered into the presence of an elderly lady and her two daughters, both of whom spoke French. I apologized for my intrusion; told them my extreme anxiety to go on that night, and begged them to procure some one to take the governor's order to the commandant; in fact, I had become nervous, and did not consider myself safe till out of the place. They called in a younger brother, who started with alacrity on the errand, and I sat down to wait his return. There must be a witchery about Polish ladies. I was almost savage against all mankind; I had been kept up to the extremest point of indignation without any opportunity of exploding all day, and it would have been a great favour for some one to knock me down; but in a few minutes all my bitterness and malevolence melted away, and before tea was over I forgot that I had been bandied all day from pillar to post, and even forgave the boors who had mocked me, in consideration of their being the countrymen of the ladies who were showing me such kindness. Even with them I began with the chafed spirit that had been goading me on all day; but when I listened to the calm and sad manner in which they replied; that it was annoying, but it was light, very light, compared with the scenes through which they and all their friends had passed, I was ashamed of my petulance. A few words convinced me that they were the Poles of my imagination and heart. A widowed mother and orphan children, their staff and protector had died in battle, and a gallant brother was then wandering an exile in France. I believe it is my recollection of Polish ladies that gives me a

leaning toward rebels. I never met a Polish lady who was not a rebel, and I could but think, as long as the startling notes of revolution continue to fall like music from their pretty lips, so long the Russian will sleep on an unquiet pillow in Poland.

It was more than an hour before the brother returned, and I was sorry when he came; for, after my professions of haste, I had no excuse for remaining longer. I was the first American they had ever seen; and if they do not remember me for anything else, I am happy to have disabused them of one prejudice against my country, for they believed the Americans were all black. At parting, and at my request, the eldest daughter wrote her name in my memorandum-book, and I bade them farewell.

It was eleven o'clock when I left the house, and at the first transition from their presence the night seemed of pitchy darkness. I groped my way into the square, and found my calèche gone. I stood for a moment on the spot where I had left it, ruminating what I should do. Perhaps my poor Pole had given me up as lost, and taken out letters of administration upon my carpet-bag. Directly before me, intersecting the range of houses on the opposite side of the square, was a street leading out of the town. I knew that he was a man to go straight ahead, turning neither to the right hand nor the left. I walked on to the opening, followed it a little way, and saw on the right a gate opening to a shed for stabling. I went in, and found him with his horses unharnessed, feeding them, whipping them, and talking at them in furious Polish. As soon as he saw me he left them and came at me in the same tone, throwing up both his hands, and almost flourishing them in my face;

then went back to his horses, began pitching on the harness, and, snatching up the meal-bag, came back again toward me, all the time talking and gesticulating like a Bedlamite. I was almost in despair. What have I done now? Even my poor peasant turns against me; this morning he kissed my foot, now he is ready to brain me with a meal-bag. Roused by the uproar, the old woman, proprietor of the shed, came out, accompanied by her daughter, a pretty little girl about twelve years old, carrying a lantern. I looked at them without expecting any help. My peasant moved between them and me and the horses, flourishing his meal-bag, and seeming every moment to become more and more enraged with me. I looked on in dismay, when the little girl came up, and dropping a courtesy before me, in the prettiest French I ever heard, asked me, "Que voulez vous, monsieur?" I could have taken her up in my arms and kissed her. I have had a fair share of the perplexity which befalls every man from the sex, but I hold many old accounts cancelled by the relief twice afforded me this day. Before coming to a parley with my Pole, I took her by the hand, and, sitting down on the tongue of a wagon, learned from her that she had been taken into the house of a rich seigneur to be educated as a companion for his daughter, and was then at home on a visit to her mother; after which she explained the meaning of my postillion's outcry. Besides his apprehensions for me personally, he had been tormented with the no less powerful one of losing the promised ten rubles upon his arrival at a fixed time at Mic-hoof, and all his earnestness was to hurry me off at once, in order to give him a chance of still arriving within the time. This was exactly the humour in which I wanted

to find him, for I had expected great difficulty in making him go on that night ; so I told him to hitch on his horses, and at parting did give the little girl a kiss, and the only other thing I could give her without impoverishing myself was a silk purse as a memento. I lighted my pipe, and, worn out with the perplexities of the day, in a short time forgot police and passports, rude Russians and dastardly Poles, and even the Polish ladies and the little girl.

I woke the next morning under a shed, horses harnessed, postillion on the box whipping, and a Jew at their head holding them, and the two bipeds quarrelling furiously about the stabling. I threw the Jew a florin, and he let go his hold, though my peasant shook his whip, and roared back at him long after we were out of sight and hearing. At a few miles' distance we came to a stopping-place, where we found a large calèche with four handsome horses, and the postillion in the costume of a peasant of Cracow, a little square red cap with a red feather, a long white frock somewhat like a shooting-jacket, bordered with red, a belt covered with pieces of brass like scales lapping over each other, and a horn slung over his right shoulder. It belonged to a Polish seigneur, who, though disaffected toward government, had succeeded in retaining his property, and was the proprietor of many villages. He was accompanied by a young man about thirty, who spoke a very little French ; less than any man whom I ever heard attempt to speak it at all. They had with them their own servants and cooking apparatus, and abundance of provisions. The seigneur superintended the cooking, and I did them the honour to breakfast with them. While we were breakfasting a troop of wagon-

ers or vagabonds were under the shed dancing the mazurka. The better class of Poles are noble, high-spirited men, warm and social in their feelings, and to them, living on their estates in the interior of their almost untrodden country, a stranger is a curiosity and a treasure. The old seigneur was exceedingly kind and hospitable, and the young man and I soon became on excellent terms. I was anxious to have a friend in case of a new passport difficulty, and at starting gladly embraced his offer to ride with me. As soon as we took our seats in the calèche we lighted our pipes and shook hands as a bargain of good-fellowship. Our perfect flow of confidence, however, was much broken by the up-hill work of making ourselves understood. I was no great scholar myself, but his French was execrable; he had studied it when a boy, but for more than ten years had not spoken a word. At one time, finding it impossible to express himself, he said, "Parlatis Latinum?" "Can you speak Latin?" I at first thought it was some dialect of the country, and could not believe that he meant the veritable stuff that had been whipped into me at school, and which, to me, was most emphatically a dead language; but necessity develops all that a man has, and for three hours we kept up an uninterrupted stream of talk in bad Latin and worse French.

Like every Pole whom I met, except the employés in the public offices, from the bottom of his heart he detested a Russian. He had been a soldier during the revolution, and lay on his back crippled with wounds when it was crushed by the capture of Warsaw. I showed him the coin which had accidentally come into my hands, and when we came to the point where our roads separated, he said that he was ashamed to do so,

but could not help begging from me that coin ; to me it was merely a curiosity, to him it was a trophy of the brilliant but shortlived independence of his country. I was loath to part with it, and would rather have given him every button on my coat ; but I appreciated his patriotic feeling, and could not refuse. I got out, and he threw his arms around me, kissed me on both cheeks, called me his friend and brother, and mounted the kibitka with the old seigneur. The latter invited me to go with him to his château, about a day's journey distant, and if I had expected to write a book I should certainly have done so.

I went on again alone. At about twelve o'clock we arrived at the town of Kielse. I felt nervous as we approached the barrier. I threw myself back in the calèche, and drew my cap over my eyes in grand seigneur style, the soldier touched his hat as he opened the gate, and we drove into the public square unmolested. I breathed more freely, but almost hesitated to leave the calèche while the horses fed. I smiled, however, at thinking that any effort to avoid observation was the very way to attract it, and went to a *kukernia*, where I drank coffee, ate bread encrusted with sugar, and smoked a pipe until my Pole came in and kissed my foot as an intimation that the horses were ready.

No questions were asked at the barrier ; and we rode on quietly till nine o'clock, when we drove under the shed of a *caravanserai*. Fifteen or twenty wagoners were eating off a bench, and, as they finished, stretched themselves on the floor for sleep. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and I strolled out for a walk. The whole country was an immense plain. I could see for a great distance, and the old shed was the only roof in

sight. It was the last night of a long journey through wild and unsettled countries. I went back to the time when, on a night like that, I had embarked on the Adriatic for Greece; thought of the many scenes I had passed through since, and bidding farewell to the plains of Poland, returned to my calèche, drew my cloak around me, and was soon asleep.

At nine o'clock we stopped at a feeding-place, where a horde of dirty Jews were at a long table eating. I brushed off one corner, and sat down to some bread and milk. Opposite me was a beggar woman dividing with a child about ten years old a small piece of dry black bread. I gave them some bread and a jar of milk, and I thought, from the lighting up of the boy's face, that it was long since he had had such a meal.

At twelve o'clock we reached Michoof, the end of my journey with the calèche. I considered my difficulties all ended, and showed at the posthouse my letter from the Polish captain to the commissario. To my great annoyance, he was not in the place. I had to procure a conveyance to Cracow; and having parted with my poor Pole overwhelmed with gratitude for my treatment on the road and my trifling gratuity at parting, I stood at the door of the posthouse with my carpet-bag in my hand, utterly at a loss what to do. A crowd of people gathered round, all willing to assist me, but I could not tell them what I wanted. One young man in particular seemed bent upon serving me; he accosted me in Russian, Polish, and German. I answered him in English, French, and Italian, and then both stopped. As a desperate resource, and almost trembling at my own temerity, I asked him the question I had learned from my yesterday's companion "Parlates Latinum?" and he

answered me with a fluency and volubility that again threw me into another perplexity, caught my hand, congratulated me upon having found a language both understood, praised the good old classic tongues, offered his services to procure anything I wanted, &c., and all with such rapidity of utterance that I was obliged to cry out with something like the sailor's "vast heaving," and tell him that, if he went on at that rate, it was all Russian to me. He stopped, and went on more moderately, and with great help from him I gave him to understand that I wanted to hire a wagon to take me to Cracow. "Venite cum me," said my friend, and conducted me round the town until we found one. I then told him I wanted my passport *visé* for passing the frontier. "Venite cum me," again said my friend, and took me with him and procured the *visé*; then that I wanted a dinner; still he answered "Venite cum me," and took me to a trattoria, and dined with me. At dinner my classical friend did a rather unclassical thing. An enormous cucumber was swimming in a tureen of vinegar. He asked me whether I did not want it; and, taking it up in his fingers, ate it as a dessert, and drinking the vinegar out of the tureen, smacked his lips, wiped his mustaches with the tablecloth, and pronounced it "optimum." For three hours we talked constantly, and talked nothing but Latin. It was easy enough for him, for, as he told me, at school it had been the language of conversation. To me it was like breaking myself into the treadmill; but, once fairly started, my early preceptors would have been proud of my talk. At parting he kissed me on both cheeks, rubbed me affectionately with his mustaches,

and, after I had taken my seat, his last words were, "*Semper me servate in vestra memoria.*"

We had four and a half German, or about eighteen English, miles to Cracow. We had a pair of miserable, ragged little horses, but I promised my postillion two florins extra if he took me there in three hours, and he started off so furiously that in less than an hour the horses broke down, and we had to get out and walk. After breathing them a little they began to recover, and we arrived on a gentle trot at the frontier town, about half way to Cracow. My passport was all right, but here I had a new difficulty in that I had no passport for my postillion. I had not thought of this, and my classical friend had not suggested it. It was exceedingly provoking, as to return would prevent my reaching Cracow that night. After a parley with the commanding officer, a gentlemanly man, who spoke French very well, he finally said that my postillion might go on under charge of a soldier to the next posthouse, about a mile beyond, where I could get another conveyance and send him back. Just as I had thanked him for his courtesy, a young gentleman from Cracow, in a barouche with four horses, drove up, and, hearing my difficulty, politely offered to take me in with him. I gladly accepted his offer, and arrived at Cracow at about dark, where, upon his recommendation, I went to the Hotel de la Rose Blanche, and cannot well describe the satisfaction with which I once more found myself on the borders of civilized Europe, within reach of the ordinary public conveyances, and among people whose language I could understand. "Shall I not take mine ease in mine own inn?" Often, after a hard day's journey, I have asked myself this question, but seldom with the same self-

complacency and the same determination to have mine ease as at Cracow. I inquired about the means of getting to Vienna, which, at that moment, I thought no more of than a journey to Boston. Though there was no particular need of it, I had a fire built in my room for the associations connected with a cheerful blaze. I put on my morning-gown and slippers, and hauling up before the fire an old chints-covered sofa, sent for my landlord to come up and talk with me. My host was an Italian, and an excellent fellow. Attached to his hotel was a large restaurant, frequented by the first people at Cracow. During the evening an old countess came there to sup; he mentioned to her the arrival of an American, and I supped with her and her niece; neither of them, however, so interesting as to have any effect upon my slumber.

CHAPTER XIV.

Cracow.—Casimir the Great.—Kosciusko.—Tombs of the Polish Kings.—A Polish Heroine.—Last Words of a King.—A Hero in Decay.—The Salt-mines of Cracow.—The Descent.—The Mines.—Underground Meditations.—The Farewell.

CRACOW is an old, curious, and interesting city, situated in a valley on the banks of the Vistula; and approaching it as I did, toward the sunset of a summer's day, the old churches and towers, the lofty castles and the large houses spread out on the immense plains, gave it an appearance of actual splendour. This faded away as I entered, but still the city inspired a feeling of respect, for it bore the impress of better days. It contains numerous churches, some of them very large, and remark-

able for their style and architecture, and more than a hundred monasteries and convents. In the centre is a large square, on which stands the church of Notre Dame, an immense Gothic structure, and also the old palace of Sobieski, now cut down into shops, and many large private residences, uninhabited and falling to ruins. The principal streets terminate in this square. Almost every building bears striking marks of ruined grandeur. On the last partition of Poland in eighteen hundred and fifteen by the Holy Alliance, Cracow, with a territory of five hundred square miles and a population of a hundred and eight thousand, including about thirty thousand Jews, was erected into a republic; and at this day it exists nominally as a *free city*, under the protection of the three great powers; emphatically, such protection as vultures give to lambs; three masters instead of one, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, all claiming the right to interfere in its government.

But even in its fallen state Cracow is dear to the Pole's heart, for it was the capital of his country when Poland ranked high among nations, and down to him who last sat upon her throne, was the place of coronation and of burial for her kings. It is the residence of many of the old Polish nobility, who, with reduced fortunes, prefer this little foothold in their country, where liberty nominally lingers, to exile in foreign lands. It now contains a population of about thirty thousand, including Jews. Occasionally the seigneur is still seen, in his short cassock of blue cloth, with a red sash and a white square-topped cap; a costume admirably adapted to the tall and noble figure of the proud Pole, and the costume of the peasant of Cracow is still a striking feature in her streets.

After a stroll through the churches, I walked on the old ramparts of Cracow. The city was formerly surrounded with regular fortifications, but, as in almost all the cities of Europe, her ancient walls have been transformed into Boulevards ; and now handsome avenues of trees encircle it, destroying altogether its Gothic military aspect, and on Sundays and fête days the whole population gathers in gay dresses, seeking pleasure where their fathers stood clad in armour and arrayed for battle.

The Boulevards command an extensive view of all the surrounding country. " All the sites of my country," says a national poet, " are dear to me ; but, above all, I love the environs of Cracow ; there at every step I meet the recollections of our ancient glory and our once imposing grandeur."

On the opposite bank of the river is a large tumulus of earth, marking the grave of Cracus, the founder of the city. A little higher up is another mound, revered as the sepulchre of his daughter Wenda, who was so enamoured of war that she promised to give her hand only to the lover who should conquer her in battle. Beyond this is the field of Zechino, where the brave Kosciusko, after his return from America, with a band of peasants, again struck the first blow of revolution, and, by a victory over the Russians, roused all Poland to arms.

About a mile from Cracow are the ruins of the palace of Lobzow, built by Casimir the Great, for a long time the favourite royal residence, and identified with a crowd of national recollections ; and, until lately, a large mound of earth in the garden was revered as the grave of Esther, the beautiful Jewess, the idol of

Casimir the Great. Poetry has embellished the tradition, and the national muse has hallowed the palace of Lobzow and the grave of Esther.

"Passer-by, if you are a stranger, tremble in thinking of human destruction; but if you are a Pole, shed bitter tears; heroes have inhabited this palace Who can equal them?

"Casimir erected this palace: centuries have hailed him with the name of the great.

"Near his Esther, in the delightful groves of Lobzow, he thought himself happy in ceasing to be a king to become a lover.

"But fate is unpitiable for kings as for us, and even beauty is subject to the common law. Esther died, and Casimir erected a tomb in the place she had loved.

"Oh! if you are sensible to the grief caused by love, drop a tear at this tomb and adorn it with a crown. If Casimir was tied to humanity by some weaknesses, they are the appendage of heroes! In presence of this chateau, in finding again noble remains, sing the glory of Casimir the Great."

I was not a sentimental traveller, nor sensible to the grief that is caused by love, and I could neither drop a tear at the tomb of Esther nor sing the glory of Casimir the Great; but my heart beat high as I turned to another monument in the environs of Cracow; an immense mound of earth, standing on an eminence visible from every quarter, towering almost into a mountain, and sacred to the memory of Kosciusko! I saw it from the palace of the kings and from the ram-

parts of the fallen city, and, with my eyes constantly fixed upon it, descended to the Vistula, followed its bank to a large convent, and then turned to the right, direct for the mound. I walked to the foot of the hill, and ascended to a broad table of land. From this table the mound rises in a conical form, from a base three hundred feet in diameter, to the height of one hundred and seventy-five feet. At the four corners formerly stood small houses, which were occupied by revolutionary soldiers who had served under Kosciusko. On the farther side, enclosed by a railing, was a small chapel, and within it a marble tomb covering Kosciusko's heart! A circular path winds round the mound; I ascended by this path to the top. It is built of earth sodded, and was then covered with a thick carpet of grass, and reminded me of the tumuli of the Grecian heroes on the plains of Troy; and perhaps, when thousands of years shall have rolled by, and all connected with our age be forgotten, and time and exposure to the elements shall have changed its form, another stranger will stand where I did, and wonder why and for what it was raised. It was erected in 1819 by the voluntary labour of the Polish people; and so great was the enthusiasm, that, as an eyewitness told me, wounded soldiers brought earth in their helmets, and women in their slippers; and I remembered, with a swelling heart, that on this consecrated spot a nation of brave men had turned to my country as the star of liberty, and that here a banner had been unfurled and hailed with acclamations by assembled thousands, bearing aloft the sacred inscription, "Kosciusko, the friend of Washington!"

The morning was cold and dreary, the sky was over-

cast with clouds, and the sun, occasionally breaking through, lighted up for a moment with dazzling brilliancy the domes and steeples of Cracow, and the palace and burial-place of her kings, emblematic of the fitful gleams of her liberty flashing and dazzling, and then dying away. I drew my cloak around me, and remained there till I was almost drenched with rain. The wind blew violently, and I descended and sheltered myself at the foot of the mound, by the grave of Kosciusko's heart!

I returned to the city and entered the Cathedral Church. It stands by the side of the old palace, on the summit of the rock of Wauvel, in the centre of and commanding the city, enclosed with walls and towers, and allied in its history with the most memorable annals of Poland; the witness of the ancient glory of her kings, and their sepulchre. The rain was pattering against the windows of the old church as I strolled through the silent cloisters and among the tombs of the kings. A verger in a large cocked hat, and a group of peasants, moved, like myself, with noiseless steps, as if afraid to disturb the repose of the royal dead. Many of the kings of Poland fill but a corner of the page of history. Some of their names I had forgotten, or, perhaps, never knew until I saw them inscribed on their tombs; but every monument covered a head that had worn a crown, and some whose bones were mouldering under my feet will live till the last records of heroism perish.

The oldest monument is that of Wladislaus le Bref, built of stone, without any inscription, but adorned with figures in bas-relief, which are very much injured. He died in thirteen hundred and thirty-three, and chose

himself the place of his eternal rest. Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, on his invasion of Poland, visited the Cathedral Church, and stopped before this tomb. A distinguished canon who attended him, in allusion to the position of John Casimir, who was then at war with the King of Sweden, remarked, "And that king was also driven from his throne, but he returned and reigned until his death." The Swede answered with bitterness, "But your John Casimir will never return." The canon replied respectfully, "God is great and fortune is fickle;" and the canon was right, for John Casimir regained his throne.

I approached with a feeling of veneration the tomb of Casimir the Great. It is of red marble; four columns support a canopy, and the figure of the king, with a crown on his head, rests on a coffin of stone. An iron railing encloses the monument. It is nearly five hundred years since the palatins and nobles of Poland, with all the insignia of barbaric magnificence, laid him in the place where his ashes now repose. The historian writes, "Poland is indebted to Casimir for the greatest part of her churches, palaces, fortresses, and towns," adding that "he found Poland of wood and left her of marble." He patronized letters, and founded the University of Cracow; promoted industry and encouraged trade; digested the unwritten laws and usages into a regular code; established courts of justice; repressed the tyranny of the nobles, and died with the honourable title of King of the Peasants; and I did not forget, while standing over his grave, that beneath me slept the spirit that loved the groves of Lobzow and the heart that beat for Esther the Jewess.

The tomb of Sigismund I. is of red marble, with a

figure as large as life reclining upon it. It is adorned with bas-reliefs and the arms of the republic, the white eagle and the armed cavalier of Lithuania. He died in fifteen hundred and forty-one, and his monument bears the following inscription in Latin: "Sigismund Jagellon, King of Poland, Grand-duke of Lithuania, Conqueror of the Tartars, of the Wallachians, of the Russians and Prussians, reposes under this stone, which he prepared for himself." Forty years ago Thaddeus Czacki, the Polish historian, opened the tombs of the kings, and found the head of Sigismund resting upon a plate of silver bearing a long Latin inscription; the body measured six feet and two inches in height, and was covered with three rich ermines; on the feet were golden spurs, a chain of gold around the neck, and a gold ring on one finger of the left hand. At his feet was a small pewter coffin enclosing the body of his son by Bone Sforza.

By his side lies the body of his son Sigismund II, the last of the Jagellons, at whose death began the cabals and convulsions of an elective monarchy, by which Poland lost her influence among foreign powers. His memory is rendered interesting by his romantic love for Barbe Radzewill. She appeared at his father's court, the daughter of a private citizen, celebrated in Polish history and romance as uniting to all a woman's beauty a mingled force and tenderness, energy and goodness. The prince had outlived all the ardour of youth; disappointed and listless amid pleasures, his energy of mind destroyed by his excesses, inconstant in his love, and at the summit of human prosperity, living without a wish or a hope; but he saw Barbe, and his heart beat anew with

the pulsations of life. In the language of his biographer, he proved, in all its fulness, that sentiment which draws to earth by its sorrows and raises to heaven by its delights. He married her privately, and on his father's death proclaimed her queen. The whole body of nobles refused to acknowledge the marriage, and one of the nuncios, in the name of the representatives of the nation, supplicated him for himself, his country, his blood, and his children, to extinguish his passion; but the king swore on his sword that neither the diet, nor the nation, nor the whole universe should make him break his yows to Barbe; that he would a thousand times rather live with her out of the kingdom than keep a throne which she could not share; and was on the point of abdicating, when his opponents offered to do homage to the queen. When Czacki opened the coffin of this prince, he found the body perfectly preserved, and the head, as before, resting on a silver plate containing a long Latin inscription.

At the foot of his coffin is that of his sister and successor, Anne; and in a separate chapel is the tomb of Stephen Battory, one of the greatest of the kings of Poland, raised to the throne by his marriage with Anne.

I became more and more interested in this asylum of royal dead. I read there almost the entire history of the Polish republic, and again I felt that it was but a step from the throne to the grave, for near me was the great chair in which the kings of Poland were crowned. I paused before the tomb of John Casimir: and there was something strangely interesting in the juxtaposition of these royal dead. John Casimir lies by the side of the brother whom he endeavoured to supplant in his éléction to the throne. His reign was a continued suc-

cession of troubles and misfortunes. Once he was obliged to fly from Poland. He predicted what has since been so fearfully verified, that his country, enfeebled by the anarchy of its government and the licentiousness of the nobles, would be dismembered among the neighbouring powers ; and, worn out with the cares of royalty, abdicated the throne, and died in a convent in France. I read at his tomb his pathetic farewell to his people.

“People of Poland,

“It is now two hundred and eighty years that you have been governed by my family. The reign of my ancestors is past, and mine is going to expire. Fatigued by the labours of war, the cares of the cabinet, and the weight of age ; oppressed with the burdens and vicissitudes of a reign of more than twenty-one years, I, your king and father, return into your hands what the world esteems above all things, a crown, and choose for my throne six feet of earth, where I shall sleep with my fathers. When you show my tomb to your children, tell them that I was the foremost in battle and the last in retreat ; that I renounced regal grandeur for the good of my country, and restored my sceptre to those who gave it me.”

By his side, and under a monument of black marble, lies the body of his successor, Michel Wisniowecki, an obscure and unambitious citizen, who was literally dragged to the throne, and wept when the crown was placed upon his head, and of whom Casimir remarked, when informed of his late subjects' choice, “What, have they put the crown on the head of that poor fellow ?” And again I was almost startled by the strange and unnatural mingling of human ashes. By the side

of that "poor fellow" lies the "famous" John Sobieski, the greatest of the long line of kings of a noble and valorous nation ;

"One of the few, the immortal names,
That were not born to die."

On the lower floor of the church, by the side of Poniatowski, the Polish Bayard, is the tomb of one nobler in my eyes than all the kings of Poland or of the world. It is of red marble, ornamented with the cap and plume of the peasant of Cracow, and bears the simple inscription "T. Kosciusko." All over the church I had read elaborate panegyrics upon the tenants of the royal sepulchres, and I was struck with this simple inscription, and remembered that the white marble column reared amid the magnificent scenery of the Hudson, which I had often gazed at from the deck of a steamboat, and at whose base I had often stood, bore also in majestic simplicity the name of "Kosciusko." It was late in the afternoon, and the group of peasants, two Poles from the interior, and a party of the citizens of Cracow, among whom were several ladies, joined me at the tomb. We could not speak each other's language ; we were born and lived thousands of miles apart, and we were strangers in our thoughts and feelings, in all our hopes and prospects, but we had a bond of sympathy at the grave of Kosciusko. One of the ladies spoke French, and I told them that, in my far distant country, the name of their nation's idol was hallowed ; that schoolboys had erected a monument to his memory. They knew that he had fought, by the side of Washington, but they did not know that the recollection of his services was still so dearly cherished in America ; and we all agreed that it was the proudest tribute that could be paid to

his memory, to write merely his name on his monument. It meant that it was needless to add an epitaph, for no man would ask, Who was Kosciusko?

It was nearly dark when I returned to my hotel. In the restaurant, at a small table directly opposite me, sat the celebrated Chlopicki, to whom, on the breaking out of the last revolution, Poland turned as to another Kosciusko, and who, until he faltered during the trying scenes of that revolution, would have been deemed worthy to lie by Kosciusko's side. Born of a noble family, a soldier from his birth, he served in the memorable campaigns of the great patriot, distinguished himself in the Polish legions in Italy under Dombrowski, and, as colonel of a regiment of the army of the Vistula, behaved gloriously in Prussia. In Spain he fought at Saragossa and Sagunta, and was called by Suchet *le brave des braves*; as general of brigade in the army of Russia, he was wounded at Valentina, near Smolensk, and was general of a division in eighteen hundred and fourteen, when Poland fell under the dominion of the autocrat. The Grand-duke Constantine censured him on parade, saying that his division was not in order; and Chlopicki, with the proud boast, "I did not gain my rank on the parade-ground, nor did I win my decorations there," asked his discharge the next day, and could never after be induced to return to the service. The day after the revolutionary blow was struck, all Poland turned to Chlopicki as the only man capable of standing at the head of the nation. The command of the army, with absolute powers, was conferred upon him by acclamation, and one of the patriot leaders concluded his address to him with these words: "Brother, take the sword of your ancestors and predecessors, Czarniecki,

Dombrowski, and Kosciusko. Guide the nation that has placed its trust in you in the path of honour. Save this unhappy country." Chlopicki, with his silver head grown white in the service of Poland, was hailed by a hundred thousand people on the Champ de Mars with shouts of "our country and its brave defender, Chlopicki, for ever." He promised never to abuse their confidence, and swore that he would defend the liberty of Poland to the last moment. The whole nation was enthusiastic in his favour; but in less than three months, at a stormy session of the diet, he threw up his high office of dictator, and refused peremptorily to accept command of the army. This brave army, enthusiastically attached to him, was struck with profound grief at his estrangement; but, with all the faults imputed to him, it never was charged that he attempted to take advantage of his great popularity for any ambitious purposes of his own.

At the battle of Gorkow he fought nominally as a private soldier, though Skryznecki and Radziwill being both deficient in military experience, the whole army looked to him for guidance. Once, when the battle was setting strong against the Poles, in a moment of desperation he put himself at the head of some disposable battalions, and turning away from an aid-de-camp who came to him for orders, said, "Go and ask Radziwill; for me, I seek only death." Grievously wounded, his wounds were dressed in presence of the enemy; but at two o'clock he was borne off the field, the hopes of the soldiers died, and the army remained without any actual head. Throughout the revolution his conduct was cold, indifferent, and inexplicable; private letters from the Emperor of Russia were talked of, and even *treason* was whispered in connexion with his name The Poles

speaking of him more in sorrow than in anger; they say that it was not enough that he exposed his person on the field of battle; that he should have given them the whole weight of his great military talents, and the influence of his powerful name; that, standing alone, without children or relations to be compromised by his acts, he should have consummated the glory of his life by giving its few remaining years for the liberty of his country. He appeared about sixty-five, with hair perfectly white, a high florid complexion, a firm and determined expression, and in still unbroken health, carrying himself with the proud bearing of a distinguished veteran soldier. I could not believe that he had bartered the precious satisfaction of a long and glorious career for a few years of ignoble existence; and, though a stranger, could but regret that, in the wane of life, circumstances, whether justly or not, had sullied an honoured name. It spoke loudly against him that I saw him sitting in a public restaurant at Cracow, unmolested by the Russian government.

The next day I visited the celebrated salt-mines at Wielitska. They lie about twelve miles from Cracow, in the province of Galicia, a part of the kingdom of Poland, which, on the unrighteous partition of that country, fell to the share of Austria. Although at so short a distance, it was necessary to go through all the passport formalities requisite on a departure for a foreign country. I took a fiacre and rode to the different bureaux of the city police, and, having procured the permission of the municipal authorities to leave the little territory of Cracow, rode next to the Austrian consul, who thereupon, and in consideration of one dollar to him in hand paid, was graciously pleased to permit me to

enter the dominions of his master the Emperor of Austria. It was also necessary to have an order from the director of the mines to the superintendent; and furnished with this, I again mounted my fiacre, rattled through the principal street, and in a few minutes crossed the Vistula. At the end of the bridge an Austrian soldier stopped me for my passport, a *douanier* examined my carriage for articles subject to duty, and, these functionaries being satisfied, in about two hours from the time at which I began my preparations I was fairly on my way.

Leaving the Vistula, I entered a pretty, undulating, and well-cultivated country, and saw at a distance a high dark line, marking the range of the Carpathian mountains. It was a long time since I had seen anything that looked like a mountain. From the Black Sea the whole of my journey had been over an immense plain, and I hailed the wild range of the Carpathian as I would the spire of a church, as an evidence of the approach to regions of civilization.

In an hour and a half I arrived at the town of Wielitaka, containing about three thousand inhabitants, and standing, as it were, on the roof of the immense subterraneous excavations. The houses are built of wood, and the first thing that struck me was the almost entire absence of men in the streets, the whole male population being employed in the mines, and then at work below. I rode to the office of the superintendent, and presented my letter, and was received with great civility of manner; but his *Polish* was perfectly unintelligible. A smutty-faced operative, just out of the mines, accosted me in Latin, and I exchanged a few shots with him, but hauled off on the appearance of a man whom the su-

perintendent had sent for to act as my guide; an old soldier who had served in the campaigns of Napoleon, and, as he said, become an amateur and proficient in fighting and French. He was dressed in miner's costume, fanciful, and embroidered with gold, holding in his hand a steel axe; and, having arrayed me in a long white frock, conducted me to a wooden building covering the shaft which forms the principal entrance to the mine. This shaft is ten feet square, and descends perpendicularly more than two hundred feet into the bowels of the earth. We arranged ourselves in canvass seats, and several of the miners, who were waiting to descend, attached themselves to seats at the end of the ropes, with lamps in their hands, about eight or ten feet below us.

When my feet left the brink of the shaft I felt, for a moment, as if suspended over the portal of a bottomless pit; and as my head descended below the surface, the rope, winding and tapering to a thread, seemed letting me down to the realms of Pluto. But in a few moments we touched bottom. From within a short distance of the surface, the shaft is cut through a solid rock of salt, and from the bottom passages almost innumerable are cut in every direction through the same bed. We were furnished with guides, who went before us bearing torches, and I followed through the whole labyrinth of passages, forming the largest excavations in Europe, peopled with upward of two thousand souls, and giving a complete idea of a subterraneous world. These mines are known to have been worked upward of six hundred years, being mentioned in the Polish annals as early as twelve hundred and thirty-seven, under Boleslaus the Chaste, and then not as a new discovery, but how much earlier they had existed cannot now be

ascertained. The tradition is, that a sister of St. Casimir, having lost a gold ring, prayed to St. Anthony, the patron saint of Cracow, and was advised in a dream that, by digging in such a place, she would find a treasure far greater than that she had lost, and within the place indicated these mines were discovered.

There are four different stories or ranges of apartments; the whole length of the excavations is more than six thousand feet, or three quarters of an hour's walk, and the greatest breadth more than two thousand feet; and there are so many turnings and windings that my guide told me, though I hardly think it possible, that the whole length of all the passages cut through this bed of salt amounts to more than three hundred miles. Many of the chambers are of immense size. Some are supported by timber, others by vast pillars of salt; several are without any support in the middle, and of vast dimensions, perhaps eighty feet high, and so long



Salt-mines of Wielitzka.

and broad as almost to appear a boundless subterraneous cavern. In one of the largest is a lake covering nearly the whole area. When the King of Saxony visited this

place in eighteen hundred and ten, after taking possession of his moiety of the mines as Duke of Warsaw, this portion of them was brilliantly illuminated, and a band of music, floating on the lake, made the roof echo with patriotic airs. We crossed the lake in a flatboat by a rope, the dim light of torches, and the hollow sound of our voices, giving a lively idea of a passage across the Styx; and we had a scene which might have entitled us to a welcome from the prince of the infernals, for our torch-bearers quarrelled, and in a scuffle that came near carrying us all with them, one was tumbled into the lake. Our Charon caught him, and, without stopping to take him in, hurried across, and as soon as we landed beat them both unmercifully.

From this we entered an immense cavern, in which several hundred men were working with pickaxes and hatchets, cutting out large blocks of salt, and trimming them to suit the size of barrels. With their black faces begrimed with dust and smoke, they looked by the light of the scattered torches like the journeymen of Beelzebub, the prince of darkness, preparing for some great blow-up, or like the spirits of the damned condemned to toil without end. My guide called up a party, who disengaged with their pickaxes a large block of salt from its native bed, and in a few minutes cut and trimmed it to fit the barrels in which they are packed. All doubts as to their being creatures of our upper world were removed by the eagerness with which they accepted the money I gave them; and it will be satisfactory to the advocates of that currency to know that paper money passes readily in these lower regions.

There are more than a thousand chambers or halls, most of which have been abandoned and shut up. In

one is a collection of fanciful things, such as rings, books, crosses, &c., cut in the rock-salt. Most of the principal chambers had some name printed over them, as the "Archduke," "Carolina," &c. Whenever it was necessary, my guides went ahead and stationed themselves in some conspicuous place, lighting up the dark caverns with the blaze of their torches, and, after allowing me a sufficient time, struck their flambeaux against the wall, and millions of sparks flashed and floated around and filled the chamber. In one place, at the end of a long, dark passage, a door was thrown open, and I was ushered suddenly into a spacious ball-room lighted with torches; and directly in front, at the head of the room, was a transparency with coloured lights, in the centre of which were the words "Excelsio hospiti," "To the illustrious guest," which I took to myself, though I believe the greeting was intended for the same royal person for whom the lake chamber was illuminated. Lights were ingeniously arranged around the room, and at the foot, about twenty feet above my head, was a large orchestra. On the occasion referred to a splendid ball was given in this room; the roof echoed with the sound of music; and nobles and princely ladies flirted and coquetted the same as above ground; and it is said that the splendid dresses of a numerous company, and the blaze of light from the chandeliers reflected upon the surface of the rock-salt, produced an effect of inconceivable brilliancy. My chandeliers were worse than Allan M'Aulay's strapping Highlanders with their pine torches, being dirty, ragged, smutty-faced rascals, who threw the light in streaks across the hall. I am always willing to believe fanciful stories; and if my guide had thrown in a handsome young princess as part of the

welcome to the "Excelsa hospitii," I would have subscribed to anything he said; but, in the absence of a consideration, I refused to tax my imagination up to the point he wished. Perhaps the most interesting chamber of all is the chapel dedicated to that Saint Anthony who brought about the discovery of these mines. It is supposed to be more than four hundred years old. The columns, with their ornamented capitals, the arches, the images of the Saviour, the Virgin and saints, the altar and the pulpit, with all their decorations, and the figures of two priests represented at prayers before the shrine of the patron saint, are all carved out of the rock-salt, and to this day grand mass is regularly celebrated in the chapel once every year.

Following my guide through all the different passages and chambers, and constantly meeting miners and seeing squads of men at work, I descended by regular stairs cut in the salt, but in some places worn away and replaced by wood or stone, to the lowest gallery, which is nearly a thousand feet below the surface of the earth. I was then a rather veteran traveller, but up to this time it had been my business to move quietly on the surface of the earth, or, when infected with the soaring spirit of other travellers, to climb to the top of some lofty tower or loftier cathedral; and I had fulfilled one of the duties of a visiter to the eternal city by perching myself within the great ball of St. Peter's; but here I was far deeper under the earth than I had ever been above it; and at the greatest depth from which the human voice ever rose, I sat down on a lump of salt and soliloquized,

"Through what varieties of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!"

I have since stood upon the top of the Pyramids, and admired the daring genius and the industry of man, and at the same time smiled at his feebleness when, from the mighty pile, I saw in the dark ranges of mountains, the sandy desert, the rich valley of the Nile and the river of Egypt, the hand of the world's great Architect; but I never felt man's feebleness more than here; for all these immense excavations, the work of more than six hundred years, were but as the work of ants by the roadside. The whole of the immense mass above me, and around and below, to an unknown extent, was of salt; a wonderful phenomenon in the natural history of the globe. All the different strata have been carefully examined by scientific men. The uppermost bed at the surface is sand; the second clay, occasionally mixed with sand and gravel, and containing petrifications of marine bodies; the third is calcareous stone; and from these circumstances it has been conjectured that this spot was formerly covered by the sea, and that the salt is a gradual deposit formed by the evaporation of its waters. I was disappointed in some of the particulars which had fastened themselves upon my imagination. I had heard and read glowing accounts of the brilliancy and luminous splendour of the passages and chambers, compared by some to the lustre of precious stones; but the salt is of a dark gray colour, almost black, and although sometimes glittering when the light was thrown upon it, I do not believe it could ever be lighted up to shine with any extraordinary or dazzling brightness. Early travellers, too, had reported that these mines contained several villages inhabited by colonies of miners, who lived constantly below; and that many were born and died there, who

never saw the light of day ; but all this is entirely untrue. The miners descend every morning and return every night, and live in the village above. None of them ever sleep below. There are, however, two horses which were foaled in the mines, and have never been on the surface of the earth. I looked at these horses with great interest. They were growing old before their time ; other horses had perhaps gone down and told them stories of a world above which they would never know.

It was late in the afternoon when I was hoisted up the shaft. These mines do not need the embellishment of fiction. They are, indeed, a wonderful spectacle, and I am satisfied that no traveller ever visited them without recurring to it as a day of extraordinary interest. I wrote my name in the book of visitors, where I saw those of two American friends who had preceded me about a month, mounted my barouche, and about an hour after dark reached the bank of the Vistula. My passport was again examined by a soldier and my carriage searched by a custom-house officer ; I crossed the bridge, dined with my worthy host of the Hotel de la Rose Blanche, and, while listening to a touching story of the Polish revolution, fell asleep in my chair.

And here, on the banks of the Vistula, I take my leave of the reader. I have carried him over seas and rivers, mountains and plains, through royal palaces and peasants' huts, and in return for his kindness in accompanying me to the end, I promise that I will not again burden him with my Incidents of Travel.

THE END.



